

Interviewee: Audrey Silveri  
Interviewers: Melissa McLain  
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**Abstract:** This interview focuses on the life of Audrey Silveri, a retired nurse and educator. Born in New York and raised in Massachusetts, Audrey has lived in the Northeast for her entire life. She attended the State University of New York, University of Virginia for graduate work, Assumption College for a BSN, Boston College for a MSN, and the University of Massachusetts/Amherst for her doctorate. Audrey met her husband while working at the Library of Congress and they were engaged after three months. They moved to Worcester in 1963 and raised three children. She is most proud of her accomplishments of rewriting the BSN curriculum at Anna Maria College while she was Director of the Nursing Program, acting as a devoted stay-at-home mother, and earning her Ph.D. in Education at an advanced age. Audrey refers to herself as a dreamer when coping with tough times. She tries not to pity herself, and instead of wallowing in grief, puts her life into perspective. One of her central philosophies is to always follow one's intuition and to work for one's dream. When Audrey was a girl she dreamed of one day being a nurse, but was discouraged to do so by her parents. Audrey never extinguished her dream however, and today she can look back on her life and feel content knowing her life's purpose was achieved.

**MM:** We are completing a citywide oral history of the lives of Worcester women, aiming to collect stories about a broad range of experiences. Based on the goals of the 1850 National Women Rights (Convent) Rights Convention in Worcester, we are focusing on the areas of women's education, health, work, politics, and community involvement. Thank you for your help with this important project. (laugh) Um, do we have your permission to record this interview?

**AS:** Yes, you may record.

**MM:** Great, all right let's start off with some general questions.

**PA:** Okay, what is your full maiden name and if applicable your married name?

**AS:** Audrey (pause) Marie (pause) Cahill, C-A-H-I-L-L, and my married name is Silveri, (clears throat) S-I...

**PA:** Yes

**AS:** You know that...

**PA:** So, okay.

**MM:** When were you born?

**AS:** 8, 26, 1933.

**PA:** 8, 26...

**MM:** Have, (pause), so you have been married? (laugh)

**AS:** Yes, I'm widowed. Yes, I was married for many years (clears throat), I've been widowed for 6 years.

**MM:** Aw, (pause) what was the name of your husband?

**AS:** Louis, L-O-U-I-S, D, Silveri (pause) and he was a professor here for his whole career.

**PA:** Really?

**MM:** Aw.

**PA:** Really?

**MM:** What, what subject?

**AS:** History.

**MM:** Oh, that's awesome!

**PA:** Between, (pause) between, in what time period?

**AS:** Well, we came in 1963, and I'm not sure the year he retired...

**MM:** You came to Worcester in 1963?

**AS:** Yes, yes, I, you know, I'm not, really not sure when he retired but he retired, well I suppose it doesn't matter, the exact date.

**PA:** No.

**AS:** He taught here for 42 years I believe.

**PA:** Oh wow.

**MM:** Wow.

**AS:** Okay.

**PA:** Okay.

**MM:** Do you have children?

**AS:** Yes, I have six children.

**MM:** Six children, oh, that's awesome!

**AS:** Yes.

**PA:** What are their names?

**AS:** Ann, A-N-N.

**PA:** Uh huh.

**AS:** Louis, L-O-U-I-S, Juliet, J-U-L-I-E-T, Jean, J-E-A-N, Robert, and Kathryn, K-A-T-H-R-Y-N, that's a different spelling, K-A-T-H-R-Y-N.

**PA:** Yeah, I've seen that before. Are we allowed to ask questions that aren't on the sheet?

**MM:** Yes.

**PA:** Okay it doesn't say what are their names but, (laugh) whatever.

**MM:** Do you have grandchildren?

**AS:** I do, nine.

**PA:** Oh my God.

**MM:** Wow.

**AS:** Well, you know, if you have six children...

**PA:** Yeah that makes sense, you know...

**AS:** That isn't even so many, for having six children.

**PA:** How old are your grandchildren, in general?

**AS:** Oh my God...

**PA:** What's the range? (laugh)

**AS:** The range is from 25 years old to four months.

**PA:** Wow.

**MM:** Wow.

**AS:** Isn't that something?

**MM:** Yeah.

**PA:** What about your kids, what's their age range, you don't have to answer this but... (laugh)

**AS:** I think, I think my oldest one is 51 and the youngest is 36.

**MM:** Oh.

**AS:** That works, yeah, cause it's a 15 year span.

**PA:** That's cool. We won't make you list out all your grandchildren's names. (laugh)

**AS:** No, you don't want to hear all of those. (laugh)

**MM:** What cultures or ethnicities do you identify with as a family background?

**AS:** I'm German and Irish, and my husband was Italian, pure Italian.

**MM:** Oh wow.

**AS:** So...

**PA:** Should we keep switching off the questions or I could just write the whole time, or we can switch off, it doesn't matter...(pause), oh, tell us about your parents (laugh) please. (laugh)

**AS:** Sure, my mother was a first generation, first generation born in this country of parents who came from Germany. I always think it's interesting they came from Germany, because this was in the late 1880's or 90's and there was a lot of militarism in Germany even then, and the story was that they came to escape the militarism.

**PA:** Oh.

**AS:** And my grandmother, my, yep, I never met her but, family stories, she said that the soldiers were so arrogant in Germany that they were walking along a street and you were walking along you had to get off the sidewalk, and step into the gutter.

**PA:** They had good, like, foresight, to not be there, when the Nazis...

**AS:** (laugh) They really did, but her father made caps for the German army so they actually made their living by making caps for the German army, however that went. (pause) Let's see, that's my mother, well we didn't finish, my mother, um, went to a teacher's training school, it was called in New York City. She was born in New York. Went to teacher's training school, she was very proud of that. Really the only one in her family to get a higher education and she taught, she was a New York City school teacher, for many years, up in the 40 number of years.

**PA:** My mom used to be a teacher too.

**AS:** Oh yes?

**PA:** But not anymore in Massachusetts. But she was born near New York, New Jersey...

**AS:** Oh yes, right, is that working? [referring to the tape recorder]

**PA:** Hopefully, I'm taking pretty good notes so even if it's off we'll have the basic...

**AS:** Sure.

**PA:** Sorry if we're not looking at you the whole time, but, were trying to, uh, scribble down.

**AS:** Shall I tell you about my father?

**PA:** Sure.

**MM:** Yes.

**AS:** Harold Cahill, uh his family...

**PA:** Wait, what was your mother's name, sorry, I don't think you said...

**AS:** Emma Marie Grell, G-R-E-L-L...

**PA:** G-R-E-L-L okay, your father is Robert.

**AS:** Cahill, C-A-H-I-L-L, his family came to this country as a result, I think, of the potato famine...

**MM:** Oh.

**AS:** ...in Ireland because they came in 1845, when the potato famine was but they didn't settle in New York City or Boston, they settled on a farm, which was rather unusual.

**PA:** Where was the farm?

**AS:** That was in Montgomery, New York, which was about 50 miles north of New York City, and that was a very prolific family. They had a lot of children and so the graveyard up there is full of Cahill's, all relatives of mine I guess.

**PA:** That's cool. Have you ever been there?

**AS:** Yeah, my father and mother are buried there.

**PA:** Really?

**AS:** Yeah, my father wanted to be buried there even though he didn't live there for most of his life, and he wanted to go back there, it's a very, you know, a very pretty cemetery with trees and all his family's there so...

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** It was logical.

**PA:** Yeah, makes sense.

**AS:** It was a, well he had a very multi-faceted career. Started out as a bookkeeper. He went to business school, but he was a private detective at one point, which I thought was very interesting (laughs).

**MM:** Oh wow.

**PA:** I wonder what he knew about.

**AS:** And stories, then he was a farmer, for a long time and he wanted to go back and then he worked for the post office and he, his life's ambition was to travel around the world and in fact he did, but only after he and my mother retired.

**MM:** And they traveled together?

**AS:** Yeah, um hmm.

**PA:** What kind of places did they travel to?

**AS:** Well I remember they went to Ireland and he kissed the Blarney Stone, where you have to hang upside down.

**PA:** (laughs) Yeah, I've heard of that.

**AS:** They went to Japan, they used to go on freighters. I don't know if people do that anymore but ships that were carrying products would also have room for maybe 10 or 14 people, to go along, and it was cheaper in those days to go that way, and they went that way. They went to

Greece, they went through Europe. They never went to South America, and they never went to Africa. They went to Egypt and rode on camels.

**PA:** Well Egypt is technically in Africa so they can claim that continent sort of.

**AS:** It is, it is, I guess so. So anyway, he fulfilled that ambition which was very nice in his old age.

**PA:** Not everybody could do that.

**AS:** No.

**PA:** If you work hard you get your reward.

**AS:** Right.

**MM:** Um, where have you lived during your life?

**AS:** Well I was born in New York City. I lived there until I was about 6 years old and I moved north of New York City to a town called Carmel, New York, where my father had started a farm.

**PA:** Is that spelled C-A-R-M-E-L?

**AS:** It is. I lived there until I was 16 or 17 and then I went to college in Albany, New York.

**PA:** What college?

**AS:** It's the New York State University. It wasn't then, it was a teacher's college, but it's now NYSCT, I guess, or NYS I don't know. It's got an acronym (laugh). That's very big now, you know and it's good. Let's see so I lived there through college, then I went to Virginia and I went to the University of Virginia, so I was there for two years and got my Masters.

**PA:** Masters in?

**AS:** History.

**PA:** Oh.

**AS:** Then I went to Washington D.C. And this is good because I worked in the Library of Congress.

**PA:** Oh cool.

**AS:** Because I had a history degree so I worked there in the archives, no it wasn't the archives, it was the history division, and I worked with the papers of Thomas, of Theodore Roosevelt.

**PA:** Oh.

**AS:** It was very popular just now. That was really interesting. And then I went up to New York State and I taught school there for a couple of years on Long Island and then I married, continued to live in New York with my husband while he got his doctorate and then we, he had a great longing to come back to Massachusetts where he came from. I didn't have any particular longing to come to Massachusetts (laughs) but he wanted to so he came back and went to Assumption.

**PA:** Did you want to see all the snow? (laugh)

**AS:** I was horrified of the climate cause it isn't that bad in New York and particularly on Long Island where I had lived it's much warmer. Of course it's warming up here, really, it's a climate change. It's much better than it used to be.

**PA:** (laugh) My mom says we don't have spring here.

**AS:** No we don't, it's either spring into summer.

**PA:** Pretty much.

**AS:** So since then I've lived here (clears throat) so that was 1963 to whatever, 2010, so I've spent a great bulk of my life here.

**PA:** What's that 50, no 47 years? Pretty good. (pause) Well, you didn't grow up in Worcester, um, we can still ask about your neighborhood.

**MM:** Where in Worcester do you live, like in the city part of Worcester now?

**AS:** I don't. I live in Holden.

**MM:** Oh, okay.

**AS:** I hope that doesn't throw you off. (laugh)

**MM:** No, it's okay.

**PA:** So, should we ask what was her neighborhood like in her childhood, even if it wasn't in Worcester? Or should we ask about her neighborhood now in Worcester or both? Oh never mind. (laugh)

**MM:** You told us how you got to Worcester...

**PA:** Some of these don't really apply, well where do you, well we can ask about her neighborhood in New York and then go to skip to Worcester...

**MM:** Yeah.

**PA:** Okay (laugh) sorry, logistics problems.

**AS:** I guess it was like a middle class neighborhood. I lived in a row house, a brick row house. Um, it was very convenient in those days, because you could just walk around and up to the corner and there were all different stores there and I remember being walked up there, you know, they had a fruit store, you know, a bakery, Chinese laundry, (laugh), because then you didn't have washing machines so the Chinese laundry, candy store, everything right around the corner, and then you go the other way and the subway can go anywhere in New York so, it was, it was kind of nice. It was good.

**PA:** Easy access.

**MM:** Yeah. Do any of your family members live in Worcester now or is it just you?

**AS:** Well all five of my children live around here (clears throat). My one son lives next door to me in Holden.

**MM:** Ah, no way! That's really cool.

**AS:** Yeah. It's very nice for me. One lives in Connecticut. One in New Hampshire. One in Boston. One in Groton, Massachusetts...

**PA:** Hey, my grandparents live in Groton.

**AS:** Oh really?

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** It's a beautiful town.

**PA:** Yeah, it's nice. I live in Littleton, which is right next door.

**AS:** Oh yes, and one in Florida.

**PA:** Oh wow, um, does your son that lives next to you have any kids?

**AS:** Yes, two kids.

**PA:** Oh so you get to see them a lot?

**AS:** Oh yes (laugh) all the time. I really get to see almost all the grandchildren a lot and in the summer I have a house in Maine and three teenage grandchildren stay there with me all summer.

**PA:** Oh cool.

**AS:** So that is very, very nice, yeah. So I do see them all, I am very lucky.

**MM:** In Worcester, what challenges do you think that the city still faces?

**AS:** Oh, this is a good one, I made a few notes.

**MM:** Oh did you? (laugh)

**AS:** I did. I don't know what you think of Worcester and that's really not my business I guess, but Worcester is always like a city that did not make it (laughs.) Since I've lived here and I've lived here for so many years, but there have been improvements, definitely. They have much better restaurants now than they used to, they have the DCU, you know, they have Mechanics Hall, I don't know if you've ever been to those places which are very good. They have the Hanover Theater, so they have really good productions so, culturally, I think it's come a long way. Yeah, and those places seem to attract a lot of people, you know. It's still a lot of poverty and a lot of crime, I think, in Worcester. And, you know, I read the papers every day, the educational system always seems to be in trouble. Worcester's always been a city of a lot of ethnic minorities, you know well, I guess, and right now we have a lot of Hispanic and Vietnamese, Brazilian people, people from Haiti, people from Africa even. And that's all great but they're, they're poor often, you know. But we have terrific ethnic restaurants (laughs) all of those groups have their own kind of restaurant so I guess that is a strength. Having a commuter rail to Boston has been a great help for Worcester if they work in Boston and it's a lot cheaper to live in Worcester. So, the hope always is that people will move here and commute on the train. I don't know if you have ever been on the train to Boston.

**MM:** I've taken the Peter Pan bus but I haven't taken the train.

**AS:** They're always very crowded.

**MM:** Are they?

**AS:** They're just jammed. You know, it's amazing to me. I don't know how long they've been here, maybe 10 or 12 years we've only had commuter service, and I love trains so I jumped right on, you know, the first opportunity. And they've been a great success so a lot of people use them and they are hopefully gonna get more commuter service.

**PA:** Well, when they were giving the election results on TV they said that the Worcester area is the fastest growing area in Massachusetts for new residents.

**AS:** Oh really (cough, cough) that's probably part of it.

**PA:** Yeah you're probably right.

**AS:** Because it's very, very expensive to live in Boston, you know, and a lot cheaper to live here so...

**PA:** Should we, live...have you lived in multiple areas around the, the central Mass area or...

**AS:** No, I lived in Worcester for five minutes on June Street. (laugh)

**PA and MM:** Five minutes? (laugh)

**AS:** Well it was three months I think (laugh). It was very short, a summer really, and then we moved, we bought this house in Holden and I lived there ever since, the whole rest of my life. And you know it's a funny thing, be careful what you ask for because I moved into the house and it was, it was a small house but it was nice, it had woods in the back, you know, and I lived in New York City, and I lived in Worcester and I thought, this is so heavenly, this is so nice, I'd like to live here the rest of my life, and I have (laugh) which most people don't I guess. Okay, anything else?

**MM:** She answered 13. 14 I think she kind of touched upon because of the changes she's seen already...

**PA:** We'll just do characteristics. Well besides the changing ethnic population, what distinct characteristics do you think make Worcester the place that it is?

**AS:** Well it's always, it started out as a factory town, a very blue collar town and all the factories are gone pretty much but it still seems to be a blue collar type of town, do you, oh, I'm not interviewing you. (laugh)

**PA:** I know, I feel like I should reply to you but maybe we shouldn't.

**AS:** No, I don't know what the protocol is. (pause) So I think there are a lot of people who are not well educated in Worcester, partly because there's a lot of ethnicity there's a lot of people who are poor I think in Worcester, on the other hand there's an upper, upper crust too, you know, that's lived here and that used to be the people who ran the factories, who had a lot of money who lived here. And the fact that, you know, Mechanics Hall which has a lot of classical concerts and Hanover Theater which also has -- there's popular stuff, it has plays and some are very well attended. There's got to be people who enjoy the arts who are kind of well educated and have the money to do it. So (pause) you know what's interesting about Worcester is all the three-deckers. You know, you know what I mean? The houses with three things...

**MM:** Yeah.

**AS:** Which were built originally for immigrants in the 1890's and the early 1900's and they still serve the same purpose and it was, it was cheaper because, you know, the family might get together and buy the house and then have multi-generations living in it so there'd be the grandparents would live there and the next generation and maybe an aunt and uncle on the third floor and they, they did that and they still do it. Interesting. It's a different ethnic group now.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** But they still do it.

**PA:** Yeah my dad was, lived in one of those houses 'til he was three, he's from a family of Swedish immigrants, that was one of the older groups...

**AS:** Oh yes, so you come from Worcester?

**PA:** Yeah, half my family (laugh).

**AS:** Yeah, and there were so many Swedes here at one point.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** I guess they're still here...

**PA:** There are so many Andersons, that's my...

**AS:** Yeah.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** Right, there were more here than anywhere else, they worked for Norton.

**PA:** Really?

**AS:** Norton is now St. Gobain -- it's a big company that makes abrasive products.

**PA:** Oh?

**AS:** It's not, I guess it's a lot more than sand paper which is what I think (laugh) of as abrasive products and all Swedes came over from uh, they all very much came from the same area because you know few would come and write back and say this is a good place and more and more would come. So then we had a lot of Swedes, I guess most of them are still here somewhere.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** You would know more than I do.

**PA:** I know there are still a lot of older Swedes around Worcester. Some of them have moved to the surrounding towns but...

**AS:** Huh?

**PA:** You know, like Helen's Bakery...

**AS:** Um hm.

**PA:** Maybe not but yeah, there's the, Scandinavian Gift Chalet with all the crafts and stuff, so I think it's still around.

**AS:** Yeah, probably.

**MM:** What do you think women's experiences in Worcester have been generally?

**AS:** You know that's a, that's a really interesting question and I read it and I, I have to guess, I guess... (laugh)

**PA:** Well you're a historian. (laugh)

**AS:** Well I am I guess in a way. A lot of them, I think a lot of them were immigrants who stayed home. I don't think that the earlier immigrants, certainly the Italians didn't send the women out to work, I don't think the Swedes did, although I'm not sure, you probably know more than that, I think there were a lot of people who stayed home, mothers who were, which isn't different from general population I guess for a long time, but I think now, definitely, the immigrant women work more than the men maybe...

**PA:** Yeah, I mean, in this school there's a lot of Hispanic immigrants and I know there's a woman named Maribel who works in the cafeteria...

**AS:** Um hm.

**PA:** ...and she's Hispanic I mean.

**AS:** I think so, I think that, I know Brazilian women do a lot of house cleaning. They...it's interesting how different ethnic groups, you know like the Chinese used to do a lot of laundry work and then Chinese restaurants. Brazilians form groups or companies I guess and have and do house cleaning and um, even though sometimes they're very well educated in Brazil, they can make more money house cleaning here than they can because when you come here, even if you have a degree you have to kind of reprove it and you know take exams and so on. So...

**PA:** And if you don't know English very well...

**AS:** That's right, it's pretty impossible to do it. Hispanics well, there are a lot of Mexicans in the city too, and traditionally men work in the building trades. I don't know what the women do...

**PA:** Yeah, um...

**AS:** There's no factories to work in or maybe the service industries. Well I know that people will, from Haiti and people from Africa and I think Hispanics too, a lot of them work in nursing care, in the nursing homes. And also go out to provide services to people who are homebound,

you know, cleaning and shopping and doing that so I, I think a lot of the immigrant women now do that work.

**PA:** Do you think it works kind of along the same principles like how people from one area will all come over cause they have friends who do a certain thing?

**AS:** I think so, I do.

**PA:** That makes sense.

**AS:** It, well it's interesting I, in another part of my career which I haven't got to as a nurse and a director of nursing so I saw some immigrant people in that capacity, and people from Africa and people from Haiti are wonderful nurses and they're wonderful care workers, they're just so caring and sort of human, they relate so well to people in nursing and a lot of them work there.

**PA:** Makes sense too if you don't have like an excellent grasp of the language cause everybody knows now to take care of somebody you know what I mean.

**AS:** That's right, that's right, and I mean those jobs, you know, they don't pay very well.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** And they're always needed. So I think most of the immigrant women probably did kind of menial stuff, certainly are doing now.

**PA:** Yeah, that would make sense.

**MM:** Now we move on to education (laugh).

**AS:** All right.

**MM:** Um, so where did you attend school?

**AS:** Well the first one was in Albany, New York State University. Next one was the University of Virginia...

**PA:** Oh, whoa!

**AS:** I'm like a lifelong student, so it's a lot. All right, so that was graduate school, the University of Virginia. Then I was at home, married and I was at home with my children and then I developed the desire to be a nurse. So I went to Mount Wachusett Community College and got an RN and then Assumption College had a nursing, it was the BSN in nursing and you could come in and with your, you used the credits that you had, you know and worked toward a BSN so I came to Assumption College and I got a BSN in nursing.

**PA:** Cool.

**AS:** It was in 1986. And then I went to Boston College. I sort of had to repeat my whole education. I went to Boston College and got a Masters in Nursing. (pause) And then, I got into teaching, and if you teach you need a doctorate, so I went to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and I got a doctorate, just in 2002, so...

**MM:** And a doctorate in nursing?

**AS:** It was in education.

**MM:** Oh, education.

**AS:** So that's where I went to school.

**PA:** So now you can teach people how to nurse.

**AS:** That was it, that was the point. (laugh)

**PA:** You're multi-qualified. (laugh) (pause) What about your grade school education, I don't know if that's really important for this but do you have the name of the high school or...

**AS:** Oh, that's interesting. It would have been if I went to Worcester. I went to a, well I lived in a small town and I went to a school, it was called Mahopac, M-A-H-O-P-A-C, it's an Indian name high school and it was actually, it was a big stone building, it was a beautiful building and you entered one door in kindergarten and you got out the other door (laugh) and you graduated from high school.

**MM:** Oh wow, it is just...

**AS:** The whole thing was in that one building.

**PA:** Wow. Was it like a public school?

**AS:** It was a public school, um hm.

**PA:** That's cool.

**AS:** It was really strange when you think about it.

**PA:** How many kids were in this school, do you know, like roughly?

**AS:** I don't know but my high school graduating class was 36.

**PA:** (laugh)

**MM:** No way!

**PA:** Wow, I thought I had a small class.

**AS:** (laugh)

**PA:** We were like 96.

**AS:** And that was a big school, a big class for them.

**PA:** Jeez!

**AS:** So, I don't know how you'd figure that out. I don't know how many kids were in the school.  
(laugh)

**PA:** That was a big class.

**AS:** That was a big class.

**PA:** Maybe you just do 30 times 12. 360 kids in the school maybe?

**AS:** Probably something like that, yeah.

**PA:** 300, 400?

**AS:** Yeah, I would guess.

**PA:** It's pretty small.

**AS:** It was very small, yeah.

**MM:** What were some of the challenges that you faced in your education, your long education?  
(laugh)

**AS:** I've always played catch up, my whole life I've been playing catch up. I don't know whether everybody does that, I don't think so, but I went to this little high school, this little school, and you know, the education was uneven and certainly there was not a lot of competition. So when I came out of that, although I was one of their better students, and I went up to the school in Albany, then I wasn't, I had some (laugh) I wasn't such a, a big, big frog in the pond I mean. So I had to struggle there to get up to speed really. I mean, I did, I achieved it, you know but, I didn't have a very good high school education I guess so then I had to struggle in this college. And the college was, okay, certainly it was good for me, it was a teacher's college. And then, one of my, you have to have a Masters to teach, even in those days. In New York State you had to have a Masters. So I went to the University of Virginia which is one of the top schools in the country, and I'm coming out of a, first of all a bad high school, and then kind of a mediocre college I guess and I'm going to the University of Virginia so again I have to struggle, to, you know, make it. And I did, but I was not certainly one of their stars. (laugh)

**PA:** And then were you caught up?

**AS:** Well, I was better than many, (laugh) that was a really good, good place. Yes, I didn't have to struggle in my nursing education, when I went back again and I had to redo this whole program, I was, I didn't have to struggle, I just had to learn nursing.

**PA:** That was probably enough to handle. (laugh)

**AS:** Yeah, it was, yeah.

**PA:** Um, what support networks and mentoring have been important to you?

**AS:** What question is it?

**MM:** 21.

**PA:** This is question...yeah.

**AS:** Okay, mentoring has been very important to me, and I've been very lucky to have mentors at, I think, every level that I've been in, in education. I don't know, I guess everybody needs a mentor. I think I really needed them badly.

**PA:** To help you play catch up. (laugh)

**AS:** Certainly that, really, I can remember in college, one of my, my Latin teacher actually, personally (laugh) going to the library with me and showing me how to use the library, you know, well, because I didn't know. (laugh) And I was sort of helpless and she actually, her whole life was a mentor to me. I kept in touch with her, so that was, that was good. And then in nursing, I certainly had a mentor. I had a woman at Worcester State College where I taught for a little while, who helped me a lot in my career. Just uh, you know, a mentor can guide you and then help to open doors for you.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** So, those were, you know, important. My husband was a mentor, I guess, to me. I don't know if all husbands are but, when I went back to school and I got my RN degree I thought that was enough, I wasn't gonna do anymore, I was just going to be an RN, and he kept pushing me. Because he taught at Assumption he said no you have to go to Assumption, you have to get a BSN. I don't want to go. (laugh) No, he kept nagging me so I did, you know, and he was very supportive all through this up to the point that when I went finally in my old age to go to, a lot of it was in my old age, to get the doctorate over in Amherst, we had to drive over there and the classes were at night and that's a long way, it's a long dark way. And he, I went there for a couple of classes and I said I can do the work but I can't do the commute. It's dark at night and I'm coming home at 11 on the back roads, so he drove me...

**PA:** Wow.

**AS:** ...for the rest of the time which was several years.

**PA:** Very supportive.

**AS:** Yeah he, and you know he didn't feel like doing that and when he got over there I had like two or three hour classes, he just had to hang out, you know, so he was a very, very big mentor to me.

**MM:** Did you have a first job, like, at the age of 16 or anything like that?

**AS:** Yeah, I worked in a hotel.

**MM:** Oh really?

**AS:** In the kitchen, well, I was the salad girl. (laugh) I made the salads and I put together the juice for the breakfast and that kind of thing.

**MM:** Oh, what hotel?

**AS:** Pardon?

**MM:** What hotel?

**AS:** Oh it was in Mahopac, it was in this little town where I grew up. And later I worked in another hotel there, I was a waitress.

**PA:** Lots of hotels in a small town (laugh).

**AS:** Well it happened to be a resort town...

**PA:** Oh.

**AS:** it was about 40 miles north of New York City with this really beautiful lake there and so there were a lot of hotels and it was a summer thing, you know. People would come up in the summer. So that was where everybody worked so that's where I worked.

**PA:** That's cool.

**AS:** I liked it, I mean it was really fun. I don't know if you've ever been a waitress but this was particular fun because there were just college kids or high school kids and it was like a nice group and we didn't work too hard, you know, and we could go to the lake. (laugh) It was fun.

**MM:** That's good. Did you always know that you wanted to be a nurse?

**AS:** This is interesting...

**PA:** Or a teacher (laugh)

**MM:** Or a teacher?

**AS:** Well, my mother was a teacher so I wanted to be a teacher and that was acceptable to my family. But when I was young I also thought I wanted to be a nurse, but I was just discouraged from doing that. Nursing is a very, very hard occupation and it's a very dirty occupation. You deal with a lot of terrible stuff in nursing and so they discouraged me, so I went to become a teacher. But afterwards, after I had my children I just became very interested in being a nurse so I, I have the idea that things that you want to do in your childhood are really deep rooted and eventually you'll do them, even if you don't do them right away.

**PA:** That's interesting in light of, for our English class our whole class is kind of about your destiny so you think...

**AS:** Oh yeah.

**MM:** So you think at your youngest age and then many people will just throw it away and not think of about it but...

**AS:** You get back to it. It's uncanny kind of, I've noticed it in other people too.

**PA:** So people, can you just say that again because I want to get it down.

**AS:** I think that goals that you have in childhood are true goals and you eventually work your way through to them, even though you might have a lot of detours along the way. I certainly have a lot of detours. (laugh)

**PA:** I used to want to be an astronaut. (laugh)

**AS:** Do you, well? (laugh)

**PA:** I did.

**AS:** There you go. You've gotta be young to be an astronaut so you better get on it.

**PA:** (laugh) Yeah, I don't know about that. Plus I don't really like math (laugh).

**AS:** Gee, you're very brave. I can't imagine.

**PA:** That's the part I would like to do is go in space.

**AS:** Oh my God, really?

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** What appeals to you about that?

**PA:** (laugh) Well, now I feel like I'm dominating the interview...

**AS:** I, I'm just curious, I haven't met anyone, well just you're the second person I've ever met who wanted to be an astronaut.

**PA:** I just think, uh, in fifth grade we went to an Imax movie, like a 3D movie, of footage in space and I just think it would be really cool like, I would feel totally free to float above and look down on everything, just get a bigger perspective. I don't know.

**AS:** Hmm, that's nicely explained.

**PA:** It's like a place nobody goes.

**AS:** Um hm.

**PA:** There's not many places that nobody's been to yet, you know?

**AS:** It's true.

**PA:** If you go to like Mars or something, no one else will have been there.

**AS:** That's right. Well you may be.

**PA:** It would be interesting.

**AS:** Are you actually working toward this in school?

**PA:** No, because I don't, I'm not that much into science and math, and you pretty much...

**AS:** Oh, you have to?

**PA:** But I hope when I get older like space travel becomes more of a possibility so you can go without...

**AS:** Probably will be.

**PA:** Hopefully.

**AS:** Well that's interesting.

**PA:** Yeah, anyway... (laugh)

**AS:** Okay.

**PA:** Just to go off on a tangent about astronauts. (laugh) (pause) Oh yeah, could you name the schools or hospitals that you taught or worked at?

**AS:** Well you got the Library of Congress, that was my first job, my first real job I guess. And then I worked in Mepham High School, on Long Island, I taught history.

**PA:** How do you spell...?

**AS:** M-E-P-H-A-M. (pause) And then I didn't work until I went back to nursing and my first job was at Holden Hospital, there was a Holden Hospital then. And then I went to work at Burbank Hospital, in Fitchburg, because I wanted to do maternity and that was up there.

**PA:** Oh. Like delivering babies and stuff?

**AS:** Well, I didn't deliver them because I'm not a doctor.

**PA:** Well like helped?

**AS:** Helped, yeah, um hm, yeah.

**PA:** Cool.

**AS:** And then I started teaching at Mount Wachusett Community College, so I, I continued to nurse, but I taught too, part time in both fields. And then I saw that I really liked teaching, oh I loved teaching, I started out as a teacher. And I liked teaching and I liked nursing so to combine them was really a very nice thing. So I taught at Mount Wachusett and then I taught at Worcester State College, in the nursing program. And then I became the director of a nursing program at Anna Maria College, which was a BSN program, and I just, I retired from that last year. And in fact I have a job now, (laugh) believe it or not. It's a part time job, it's at the med school where they have a graduate school of nursing, and I have a very part time job there, teaching psychiatric nursing.

**MM:** At Anna Maria or?

**AS:** No, that's at the med school.

**MM:** Oh...

**AS:** I'm not at Anna Maria, I retired from Anna Maria, so I went over there, just to teach one course.

**PA:** Wow you can't stop working. (laugh)

**AS:** Uh, no I like to work. (laugh) You get very lazy if you don't work, I'm kind of lazy already.

**PA:** (laugh) Doesn't sound like it. (laugh)

**AS:** Yeah.

**PA:** What has this work meant to you, uh, yeah, okay...I guess we haven't covered that so, what meaning have you found in your work?

**AS:** Well, I always had the grandiose idea that I could probably improve nursing education, and I think I did, because when I got to be director one day I realized I could do a lot (laugh). It took me awhile, well you know, you don't realize, oh, I'm the director, I could really fool around with the curriculum and I could do a lot of different things, so I did, I rewrote the curriculum really. And tried to include things like environmental, environmentally caused illness which is a huge thing in our society. Probably most diseases caused by the environment.

**PA:** Is that like, um, like poisoning stuff?

**AS:** Yeah you breathe, your lifestyle, the water.

**PA:** Oh yeah.

**AS:** Noise even, you know, the whole environment and how it affects you. So I did that and I had taught in public schools and I thought that nurses particularly had a great need to address spirituality because they deal with people who are in crisis all the time and people who are dying. And so that was, that became a curriculum. And I found that nurses were really open to that, they really, it wasn't like, religious, it was spiritual, you know. Sort of being with people, listening to people, trying to offer support and comfort to people through the crisis you know. So that was included in the curriculum. And transcultural nursing, because the nursing, the RN force, still is white, white women, and the patients (laugh) are not. The patients are in this area particularly, they're ethnic, they're all kinds of nationalities so I had a course in transcultural nursing so we went out and we tried to interact with, um, not nurse them but just get to know different ethnic groups, eat in different ethnic restaurants. I've eaten in a lot of ethnic restaurants in Worcester.

**PA:** I'll join your committee. (laugh)

**AS:** It was a lot of fun. That was the last class that we had so students would make these arrangements. So, so I felt that that was my contribution to nursing, to try to change the curriculum and broaden it out. (clears throat)

**PA:** Sounds like you did.

**AS:** I did. (laugh)

**MM:** In the time in which you were raising your children did you also work or did you just focus on raising your children?

**AS:** No I was home with my children until my youngest one was in first grade. And then I went to nursing school. And my youngest child has never forgiven me for that. It's funny, well maybe she has now, but (laugh) for many years she was like you stayed at home with all the others and when I went to school. Well, I figured I had to or else I never would, at that point, I was getting on, you know.

**MM:** In terms of housework, did you have to divide it up among your children or did you feel the need to take on all the responsibilities.

**AS:** Oh no. (laugh) First of all I had a messy house. (laugh)

**MM:** Well with six kids that's understandable. (laugh)

**AS:** But they had chores, they had chores from the earliest moment that they could, which is about three. A kid of three can do some little chores, you know, they can get stuff for you and they can help you set up the table and do stuff.

**PA:** They like to pretend they can't (laugh).

**AS:** They can, and they actually like to, so we, every week we would post a list of chores on the refrigerator and they changed so it wasn't always the same old chores, so somebody had to set the table while somebody had to do the dishes, you know, whatever. Somebody, the boys had to help outside, mowing the lawn and you know, that kind of thing. So, I think that's really important for kids. When my first grandchildren came, they came and spent the summer with me, they were maybe, you know, three or four or five, whatever, and they had never done any chores because people with smaller families really didn't have to have kids do chores so I said, I'm going to have you do some chores and they were fine with it really and they went back home and their mother got the idea and they had to do chores after that. Kids like to contribute I think, to be useful.

**MM:** And then you had, did you make the dinners and...?

**AS:** I always cooked. And I was lucky because my husband, being a professor, was home a lot. He came home, you know, earlier than most people would who work nine to five, come home earlier and he was very good with the chores, very very helpful so that was fine and I was staying home. I mean if you're staying home you can manage. I don't know how women, I just don't know how they do it with kids and they're working. Its very hard now, my daughters are facing that. Strangely, yeah, I had my grandchildren come in waves, so in the past couple of years one of my daughters had a baby, she's two, and the other one had the four month old baby and they had to face going back to work and its very very hard. Very very hard for them to work it out. So that's hard, that's a hard thing. Woman's role has changed a lot and I think that's really very hard for everybody.

**PA:** (pause) Well, it says how has housework changed for you over time, I mean...

**MM:** Has technology helped at all, or not really?

**AS:** Well I have help now, (laugh) it's changed a lot for me (laugh) it's very good. Well my husband was very good and he got me a dishwasher, even in years when dishwashers weren't very common so we always had a dishwasher and we always had a washer and dryer. And whatever technology was available we had, but there was you know there was still a lot of work of doing, doing housework and we have six kids, you have a pretty big house. But I can't say that it was a spotless house, or, it was a messy house, we had a lot of stuff around. And in reaction to that, five of my six kids are very very neat. (laugh) The sixth one was worse than I was (laugh) yeah.

**MM:** That's funny.

**AS:** But none of them had six kids so.

**PA:** Yeah. So how have you balanced the different roles and interests in your life? I know that you weren't, what you were saying with your daughters, you didn't work and take care of babies at the same time but when you were working two different jobs or...?

**AS:** Yeah, well, I let the house go. (laugh) Really, I think, I mean I always, it's very important to eat well, I believe that, so we always, and my husband helped too, he shared responsibilities with, not cooking but shopping, not cleaning. (laugh) So you have to do your job, and you have to be up on that. You can't let that go and you have to eat well so those things we did and I don't think you should stay up all night cleaning either so you know, we always got enough sleep, but the house suffered. And I'm in fact even now, since I've retired, have to keep working on my house and I wanted to get it, and I have pretty much got it back in very good order you know but there were things that let go. And I discovered it when I retired, my God all these things I need to do in this house, get the clutter out of it, you know. You just don't have time, you really can't, you can't do justice to a job and a house.

**MM:** Do you wish that you had worked while you were raising your kids or not at all?

**AS:** No, I think that raising the kids was the most important thing that I ever did or that people will ever do and if you can raise a family of healthy, contributing, happy people, that's the best thing that you can possibly do and I always felt that way, so I feel very blessed that I was able to stay home. I mean, it was tight, the money was very tight. A professor doesn't make a lot of money and you know, we were pretty poor, we never went hungry, we always ate well, we always had a house in a good neighborhood, but we certainly didn't have a lot of other stuff. We didn't have a lot of clothes. You know the kids will make jokes about, we always in the fall, we would buy like 100 pounds of potatoes, you know you can go to the farms and buy 100 pounds of potatoes and 50 pounds of onions and vast quantities of apples, and my husband used to buy these huge wheels of cheese. (laugh)

**PA:** Sounds like Costco.

**AS:** Yeah, they didn't have BJ's then, but it was like large quantities of things and so we'd had good food but they always said that we always had rotten apples (laugh) and cheese (laugh) for

lunch or whatever. Um, they assured me they are kind of kidding but, it was just a joke kind of, but you can do a lot with apples and onions and potatoes.

**PA:** Yeah, basic foods.

**AS:** You can.

**PA:** But you feel that it was worth it to stay home and raise the kids?

**AS:** Absolutely, absolutely. I feel very, very sad that women don't have that option now. One of my two daughters who faces, one of them has a very good position and she has a full time nanny. But it's still not the best thing when she comes home you know, she and the baby are just inseparable, naturally. And she, so well I mean, that's the way she had to solve it and the nannies are very expensive, you know, it's a full time job and a full time salary and so on. The other daughter is just facing it and she's had a work for Fidelity for a long time and now had the baby and decided, her husband also works for Fidelity so she decided she would give up her full time job and Fidelity has an option where you can work three days a week as a contractor so you don't get any benefits. You get a little more money cause you don't get any benefits but her husband can carry the benefits because he's full time and she, so that's her solution but she hates the idea of putting this baby into childcare, a baby, you know. She just thinks they need one on one and I think they do need one on one and they can't get that so, so I think its probably an awful problem facing women, I think it's the hardest problem and you don't think of it I guess maybe you don't, I don't know, until you have the baby and then you're so attached to the baby and rightly so. I think that's very hard and I don't think its good for the kids either, I mean, you need to be with them as much as you can. How about your mothers? Did your mothers, were your mothers able to stay home or did they go to work where you were...?

**PA:** Yeah, my mother did stay home for a while and my dad worked, and then my dad was unemployed and she got a job, so, you know, it was kind of what was necessary, what about you?

**MM:** My mother worked. She put my sister and I in daycare and it wasn't cheap.

**AS:** No it's not.

**MM:** ...but it was a good daycare, so we were okay luckily. She would have preferred to stay home I know.

**AS:** I think so. You know I'm very sensitive on this because my own mother didn't stay home. Believe it or not my mother was a teacher and she went back to work when I was about 20 months old.

**MM:** Who took care of you?

**AS:** She had nannies, but they were my relatives, they were her sisters, my aunts...

**MM:** Oh okay.

**AS:** Which was really good.

**MM and PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** But I can, I can remember that. I can remember being, when she went back to work and how I hated it, screamed and yelled and I always, it took me a long time, I always felt close to my aunts, almost closer than my mother, and it wasn't until I was quite old til I realized, of course you are because they took care of you when you were little, that's really strange. But anyway, so I was determined to stay home and I was lucky enough to do it, but those were times when you could.

**PA:** My mom liked staying home much better than working. She said when I have kids she'll stay home and watch them. (laugh)

**AS:** Oh that's very good, (laugh) don't let her forget that (laugh). That's important.

**MM:** Get it in writing.

**PA:** Please sign. (laugh)

**MM:** And then so Monday through Friday your husband would go to work?

**AS:** Um hm, yep.

**PA:** Okay, so should we move to politics and community involvement? (pause) Do you consider yourself active politically?

**AS:** I'm informed politically. I'm very interested in politics but I can't say I do much about it except vote. Maybe I will now that I'm retired, I used to, we used to belong to the Democratic Town Committee in Holden and organize, this is way beyond, way back, I don't know if you know history but you remember the Vietnam War when there were protests against it. There were a lot of them at Assumption by the way.

**PA:** Really?

**AS:** Yeah, I participated in those and marched around here and there and we were spending some time in North Carolina, my husband had a sabbatical and we went down there, so I was in a protest there, walking around with the Quakers. (laugh) Which is very good, the Quakers have it very much down.

**MM:** Peaceful protest.

**AS:** Yeah um, and so you walked, it was very disciplined, around the street corner and you walked around for five minutes I think silently, and silent cause the Quakers you know walked

around silently. I had my little boy with me and then you stood I think for five minutes. And if anybody approached you because people would come up on the street, people were annoyed or angry or this wasn't the popular thing to be doing, then only the leader would respond. Nobody else would say anything, which was good, I mean, nobody would get into any fights you know. So that was an exciting time, really. I'm proud of that, I'm very proud of that. (laugh) I never thought we would get into any more wars but, and I don't see any protests about the wars now but if there were I would have to join in.

**PA:** There's a lot of lazy protests complaining (laugh) and no actual protest from my point of view.

**AS:** Well the thing is, there were so many casualties in the Vietnam War, thousands and thousands, and these wars, there haven't been so many. I think these wars are terrible and I think we should get out of them, but I don't, I haven't done anything about it, except vote, to get out of them, whenever I could. (laugh) But I should be more politically active and so should we all, and maybe I will.

**PA:** Have you been in, oh my goodness, have you been involved in volunteer or community work?

**AS:** When I was staying home I was involved, I was involved in educational things. I felt like there wasn't much cultural enrichment in the Holden schools so I worked on that, started a little group of that. And I was very involved with breastfeeding, supporting people. There's a, um, an organization called La Leche League, which supports breastfeeding and I was the leader of La Leche League for a long time, when my children were home and we would have meetings and support people and try to help them.

**PA:** I think my mom's friend had her kids in La Leche preschool or playgroup or something like that.

**AS:** Oh yeah. And then I worked in Memorial Hospital in the maternity unit as a volunteer person to help people breastfeed because people have trouble in the early days sometimes, breastfeeding, and they need support so, I organized a group and we used to go in everyday and help the mothers, support the mothers. What else have I done in my life? (pause) Well I don't know I did that for a long time. After I worked I really didn't volunteer or do anything much except work.

**PA:** That makes sense.

**MM:** You don't have a lot of time for anything else.

**AS:** I know I didn't.

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

**AS:** I think a good, a big role. I'm not a vocal person about it but I have faith and I almost, been a pretty faithful Catholic. Attended Church most of my life. I'm a little bit more laid back now, but I, I go to Mass you know. (pause) And I think it's been a source of strength and comfort for me, and I regretted that um, well as children, my children get older I think they maybe become more religious but they certainly aren't, don't have that, I don't think they have it, I mean, it isn't something I talk with them about really but, I noticed that when they had kids then the kids will get baptized. But now one of them went to a Congregational Church where she's pretty active. She had her kids baptized in the Congregational Church. And then the one with the four month old is just gonna have her baby baptized in the Congregational Church. Um, (pause) the, the scandal in the Church really affected my kids a lot. They just, couldn't stomach it after that, so my two sons who had been pretty faithful churchgoers and raised their kids Catholic, just don't want any part of the Church at this point. I think that's an awful thing, that's a terrible thing, but I know that most priests weren't involved in that.

**PA:** True.

**MM:** Yeah.

**AS:** You know, so, it's a minority. So for me it's been a very important part of my life I think and I came from um, Irish Catholic, my mother was Protestant but my father was Catholic and my grandmother was very Catholic and so I was very Catholic I think, most of my life. (pause)

**PA:** Oh, hi. [referring to a woman who entered the interview room]

**AS:** Hello.

**NC:** Hi, just passing through because I'm locking the class. I'm coming back a little later.

**MM:** Now we are going to move on to health questions.

**AS:** All right.

**PA:** How have health issues impacted your life or those in your family?

**AS:** I've been very lucky, I've been very healthy in my life. I did have an operation about last year, I think, but it was okay, I recovered very well from it. My mother was very healthy, she lived to be 95 years old.

**PA:** Wow.

**AS:** My father died at 73 but he had smoked and in his old years drank more than he should so I think he came from a strong constitution but, I mean that's very tragic, you know. It's very tragic and we begged him to stop smoking for years and you know, he just didn't, just wouldn't. And he came from good stock. He would have probably lived a long time, you know. My husband...are we talking about me or other people?

**PA:** Anybody in your life, who was close to you.

**AS:** My husband was terrible of course my husband died and he had diabetes and um, he also didn't take care of himself. He was overweight and yeah, you know that's, that's a terrible thing (clears throat) and we just, I just couldn't help him. (laugh) I mean I could see the problem but, you know, the person has to want to do it themselves. You can't make anybody and you can't nag. I thought, I'm not gonna nag my life away, you know, but then he died. Maybe he would've died anyway but you know I think a lot of it is the lifestyle, you know. So he was pretty sedentary and he was pretty overweight and he got diabetes and you know. So that happens to a lot of people. And my kids are healthy on the whole.

**MM:** And your grandchildren are healthy too?

**AS:** Um hm.

**MM:** Oh good. (pause) So, throughout your life were you able to afford healthcare and...?

**AS:** We always, we always yeah. Yes we did. It didn't used to be a problem. My husband always had healthcare, you know, had benefits and then when I worked I always had healthcare and now I have Medicare and um, family clinic. So it hasn't been a problem for me. Except dental by the way, I mean, this is really bad, and I don't know, you probably all have very good teeth. People now have fluoride and they have very good teeth but I didn't have fluoride and my contemporaries don't have fluoride so at this point we strangely, we face teeth problems. (laugh) And I don't know if this is relevant but they do teeth implants now, have you heard of teeth implants?

**MM:** Yes I have.

**AS:** Okay, so I had two teeth that suddenly decided to not cooperate anymore so I said I'll see, I'll just see if they do teeth implants for me, and they do in fact and I now have one and we're working on the other but it's a long process. But it's so expensive, it's like 5,000 dollars...

**PA:** Wow.

**AS:** For one tooth. (laugh)

**PA:** When I was little I got a dollar for a tooth. You know I would put it under my pillow and (laugh) not even a dollar.

**AS:** So I don't think you'll face these kinds of problems but other people, my friends have, you know. I don't think any of them had tooth implants. I said I'm surprised, to the dentist, I'm really surprised you do tooth implants on such an old person and they said oh we even do it on older people and, this one's worked fine so, so that's good but it's so expensive and I think dental insurance is a real lack in the society. Particularly among the poorer people who don't have such a good diet and this state, it was a scandal, um, poorer children couldn't get dental care because even though, if they were on Medicaid, most dentists wouldn't accept the payments, they were

too low. So there has been a little more attention paid to it lately but, that's a real lack in our society is dental care for people who don't have any money.

**MM:** Other than your own health, are you responsible for anybody else's?

**AS:** I don't think so. (laugh)

**PA:** There might be those people that you are forgetting about. (laugh)

**AS:** No, I had a dog recently and I was responsible for his health but he, he had to pass away, he was 18 years old.

**PA and MM:** Wow.

**AS:** He was, I was like a full time nurse for him there.

**PA:** Was, was he a small dog?

**AS:** Yeah he was, he was a half poodle and half Pekinese. A very cute dog, but I only got him when he was twelve years old, so he lasted for six years. He was very good for twelve but, you know.

**PA:** Well I think the small dogs do live longer but I think 18 is awfully old for any dog.

**AS:** It's incredibly old, yeah. But he took a lot of care at the end.

**PA:** Well he had a good nurse, that's why. (laugh)

**AS:** Well he did, I had devoted myself to him.

**PA:** Have any major historical events happened in the Worcester area while you lived here?

**AS:** Hmm... (laugh)

**PA:** These are the bonus questions you're not prepared for. (laugh)

**AS:** Historical events in Worcester.

**PA:** Pop quiz.

**AS:** Well Clinton came...

**PA and MM:** Oh really?

**AS:** ...the Speke.

**PA:** In what year or roughly what year?

**AS:** It was just after the Monica Lewinsky scandal. This is sort of an interesting story and there's a lot of Democratic support in Worcester and he was, at a low ebb, you know, and people were disgusted with him and so on. I think he was a great, a very good president, and I don't really care what, well I don't like what he did in his personal life but I don't think it impacted his presidency. But anyways so, I think the mayor of Worcester invited him to come here after that and he came because, you know, he wanted to rehabilitate himself, kind of, and so he kind of had a soft spot in his heart for that. Deval Patrick campaigned here. I went to rally when Deval Patrick was first elected. He was here, Senator Kennedy was there -- who else? Somebody else who was great was there. Actually I think it was Clinton, he came back so, it was a great rally. Patrick, um, Clinton, and Kennedy, Senator Kennedy, and boy was Clinton a good speaker. Well they were all good speakers, Patrick's a good speaker. Kind of a weak governor but a good speaker, and Kennedy was a terrific speaker and Clinton was just, I don't know how, he just had this quality where he made you feel like he was just talking to you. Interesting. But I don't think of anything historical, well, the tornado happened before I moved here, (clears throat) the ice storm, probably you don't even know about, but it happened in Holden two winters ago, it was terrible. We were without power and they had the National Guard there.

**MM:** Oh my gosh.

**PA:** Aw really?

**AS:** We were without power for a week, which is a terrible thing, so my son and I and a friend of mine stayed in, we had a wood stove, so we would camped in the house with the room with the wood stove. We didn't have any light at night, keep warm, we had candles and then finally, and you couldn't get anything because, um, a lot of the towns had this problem. The higher elevation towns, Rutland, Holden, Sterling, um, I don't know if Spencer did but anyway, everyone wanted a lantern, we didn't have any electricity you know, so you couldn't get a lantern, cause they were all sold out you know. And people had generators. To me that was a big event but you know, it wasn't, I'm just burning up the last of the wood because it just destroyed so much of the woods, everything fell down. Can't think of any other historical events.

**PA:** What about that giant snow storm in 1978?

**AS:** Oh that was so much fun. (laugh) Yeah, I remember it very well. My kids were pretty young. One of them was 16 and she was out in the car driving but luckily it was a great big car, and she got home all right. I remember it as a pleasant, cozy time. I don't think, I think we still had power. I don't remember not having power, so we just hunkered down, it was huge. It was huge. But she got home, I was worried about her, we didn't even have cell phones or anything so, but she had to go way around somehow cause you couldn't get up the hills and everything but, she got there. And so we all just had fun, really, it wasn't bad. But the ice storm was awful, awful. Ah, it was like the darkest time of the year, it was so terrible. At first there weren't even restaurants in Holden so, it was terrible. (laugh)

**PA:** You could eat the snow, eat the icicles. (laugh)

**AS:** Ah, I had food...finally they got a store open and I used to go and get the, like they have food in Big Y and these stores they'll have you know the salad bars and they'll have a hot meal for poor people like me who didn't have any way to get food. (laugh) That was all.

**MM:** Um, do you remember what age you were allowed to date?

**AS:** I was 15 years old. Not that it was a big date but we went out to a prom, I think. I still have the dress.

**MM:** At 15?

**AS:** Yeah.

**MM:** Were you asked by an upperclassman?

**AS:** No, it was a boy in my same class.

**MM:** Oh, okay.

**PA:** Probably because it's such a small school they give everybody a prom.

**MM:** Yeah because usually it's for juniors and seniors, which is like 16, oh I guess 15 would work.

**AS:** Well I was young because I was pushed ahead in school so I was like 16 when I graduated so I was like a junior, I was 16.

**PA:** You were 16 when you graduated high school?

**AS:** Yes.

**PA:** Wow.

**MM:** That's incredible.

**AS:** Probably wasn't a very good idea, (laugh) but, I was probably quite immature.

**PA:** Sounds like you did okay.

**AS:** Well I had played catch up my whole life (laugh).

**PA:** So I mean, I just realized, I think we've been here for an hour and 15 minutes. I don't want to take up too much, we don't want to take up too much of your time if you have to go anywhere, but there's some interesting questions here, so I don't know if you wanna...do you?

**AS:** I'm all right. I don't have any other responsibilities other than myself today, so it's up to you.

**PA:** We can ask you all 17 or you can look at them and see if you have any like...what?

**MM:** I want to find out more. (laugh)

**PA:** I know.

**MM:** You're very interesting. (laugh)

**AS:** (laugh) Thank you.

**PA:** Should we just ask all of them or if you want you can just tell us what you think.

**AS:** Let me just go over them. I think to say much about some of them... Where did I go on dates? I used to go to stockcar races, and go to movies, (laugh) and proms. That was the extent of it, I believe.

**PA:** Did you go to one of those drive-in movie theaters?

**AS:** Um hm.

**MM:** Ah that's so fun!

**AS:** (laugh) Uh huh.

**PA:** I need to go to one of those. I think they still have one in Cape Cod.

**AS:** They were fun really.

**PA:** Whoever takes this, uh, listens to this interview is gonna be like this girl needs to shut up. (laugh)

**AS:** Well I think you're interesting too.

**PA:** Thanks. (laugh)

**MM:** Oh, what was fashionable?

**AS:** Well, in, in high school we used to wear our father's shirts, white shirt, and jeans. Interesting.

**MM:** Like a collared shirt?

**AS:** Yeah, like a, like a nice dress-up white shirt. We would take our father's shirt, and yeah, so, it didn't look bad to tell you the truth. You wear that hanging out and wear jeans on the bottom. That was considered very fashionable. (laugh)

**PA:** So would this be like um...

**AS:** To school, we wore it to school.

**PA:** ...like early 50's maybe?

**AS:** Yeah it was, I graduated from high school in 1950 so that would actually be the late 40's, yeah. I don't remember wearing that in college though, and we went to college, well I went to this teacher's college and they were trying to groom us to be teachers so they always called us like by our last name so it would be like Miss Cahill. But we would get used to that I guess and we would have to dress nicely. So we wore sweaters, sweater sets you know, twin sets, with pearls and a little skirt, pleated skirt.

**PA:** (laugh) Now teachers wear sweatpants.

**AS:** I know, and we wore knee socks, knee-high socks which were warm and cozy.

**MM:** Did you wear Mary Jane's for shoes? (laugh)

**AS:** No, loafers, with a penny stuck in them.

**MM:** Oh I know what those are, those are cute.

**PA:** They used to have them.

**AS:** Little slit where you put the penny.

**PA and MM:** Yeah.

**AS:** That's what we wore.

**PA:** That's cool.

**MM:** Oh, what was your favorite musical group?

**AS:** I don't know that I had any really. I don't know if they even had...well I guess they had musical groups. You know I always liked classical music. It's, it's a funny thing, from the time I was in high school and they used to play classical music for us in music class, music appreciation class, and the first one I liked was Vinlandia, I don't know if you like music or know anything about it. I just was very taken with classical music and my parents were very good. They bought me this wind up, um, record player, you ever wind it? You had a big vinyl thing, plastic thing, whatever it was, and you put it on it and they bought me Vinlandia and they bought me a few

other, the Nutcracker Suite, if you're familiar. Um, I really like that music better than swing, which was the big thing. I just didn't like swing, I don't like it to this day. But I very much liked the 60's when folk music came in and I liked early rock n' roll.

**MM:** Did you like the Beatles?

**AS:** Oh yes, I liked them very, very much.

**MM:** Who's your favorite Beatle?

**PA:** (laugh) Is that on the sheet?

**AS:** Probably John Lennon. Probably John Lennon. I mean he's everybody's favorite Beatle, isn't he?

**MM:** Yeah I think so.

**AS:** There's a movie on about him tonight on television, called Naked Lennon.

**PA and MM:** Ah, no way?

**AS:** Yeah, he was quite a guy really. So I like folk music very much. I liked classical music, and I like rock n' roll. And once in a while there's something good that comes out, you know, even now.

**PA:** Did you, well, did you go to like dances or clubs or anything like that?

**AS:** Well, we went to dances but I mean it was a limited thing, you know, it was in a small town, it was school dances.

**PA:** Were there any popular dances?

**AS:** (cough cough) They did the jitterbug and foxtrot.

**MM:** Oh wow. That's fancy.

**PA:** That's hard to do, the jitterbug.

**MM:** Now we have the Macarena which is like...(laugh)

**PA:** You just wave your arms around, you can just pretend (laugh)

**AS:** But I'll tell you about my mother if you're interested, she lived in New York City and she grew up in New York City and they had these great big dance halls, I guess that's what you're talking about and she used to go there, she and her sister. I guess it was fine you could just go there, in fact, and dance around with people, you know them. (laugh) I guess, yeah, like a club,

yeah. Right, but I didn't have any of that, I went to dances and in college of course we had dances too, you know, we went to those. But not clubs really so much. There was a place outside of, maybe this is an early club, it was a bar really, it was called the Washington Tavern... (laugh)

**PA:** Where was this?

**AS:** Well I think it was when I went to college, it was right near my dormitory and that's where all the college kids hung out, the Washington Tavern. Just a little bar you know. (laugh) We drank whiskey sours and went over.

**PA:** The college experience.

**AS:** Yeah.

**PA:** So, how were girls treated when you were in school, it might be different from now?

**AS:** Do you mean all through school or whatever?

**PA:** Well, I mean, that's what the question says, I assume it means like, do you think there was a different attitude toward girls then...

**MM:** Were you discriminated against in any way?

**AS:** I don't, I felt like I was treated equally.

**PA:** That's good.

**AS:** I never remember, well, I'll tell you now I do have an experience, certainly in my high school and in my first college, I was treated very good. Now when I went down to the University of Virginia, at that time the University of Virginia didn't take in women except in graduate school, so there were like 3,000 or 6,000 or 10,000 men and the graduate students, which there were maybe 50, so it was a huge, I mean you never saw another woman. (laugh) And I went, my first experience, I went to my advisor, you know, to get the program or whatever I was gonna get for the year and there was a line of men there, and they all dressed very nicely in those days. They all wore blazers and ties and chino pants, that was the uniform, and they were very polite and a lot of them came from the South. So, I'm coming up, (laugh) the only woman in sight, and I'm like this line of 10 men, and they all stepped aside. (laugh)

**MM:** How nice is that.

**PA:** Very nice.

**AS:** And I went to the front of the line (laugh) so that's how we were treated at the University of Virginia, it was this vast imbalance. There was a paradise, think of all the dates. (laugh)

**MM:** Yeah you must have been asked out every day. (laugh)

**AS:** It was terrific, it was, it was terrific.

**PA:** They were like, “Yes, a girl.” (laugh)

**AS:** So maybe women were treated with a little bit more respect, but the teachers I think it was, you know, I didn’t see any difference but, probably women. I mean, men did stand aside and let you go in the door first and held doors for you and all these sorts of things, which I think doesn’t happen, hardly now, does it?

**PA:** A few, not many.

**MM:** Yeah, there’s a couple of good guys.

**AS:** Well they were good in Virginia, I’ll tell you. (laugh)

**PA:** Did you have extra-curricular activities when you were in college or high school?

**AS:** I was very much in high school, I did a lot, I sort of like had this cyclical thing I’ve realized in my life. I was very active in high school, I was in the newspaper, and theater, and I was president of my class, for three years and then (laugh) I was deposed in the fourth year. (laugh)

**MM:** As a senior?

**AS:** Yeah, um, but it was fun. So I was very busy and then when I went to college, well I had to play catch up and I, I didn’t do much. I joined a sorority and I was very active in the sorority. Um, where we did, it was nice, we did sing at Christmas, all the sororities competed. It was really nice, they had, we would practice a couple of songs and then we’d have this day when everybody came to the auditorium and the sororities competed and they, you know. It was really very nice, you got to sing this nice song and you got to sing it with your group, but you know, it was an honor to win. So I did sorority work but I didn’t do anything else in college except I, it was wonderful, because I could go to classical things and I could go to theater and I could do all of these things that I couldn’t do in my little town, so I did that. And I studied because I was catching up. (laugh)

**PA:** That was your activity. Okay we kind of covered that, your parent’s education, your mother went to teaching school.

**AS:** Yeah, they were well educated for their day. He went to a business college and she went to this teacher’s training school which was a two-year thing.

**MM:** How did you and your husband meet?

**AS:** We met in the Library of Congress.

**MM:** Oh wow!

**AS:** I was working there and he was working there. He was a student at Georgetown University. He was working on his Masters. He had come out of the Army, (clears throat) and there weren't many people working in this place. This is the, it was just a small division of the Library of Congress where they kept all these historical papers. They had some presidential papers there in those days and he was working on the Clare Boothe Luce papers. Did you ever hear of Clare Boothe Luce?

**MM:** Yeah.

**AS:** Okay, and he was working on those and I was new and they took me through and introduced me and I saw him there and we met. Then, he was at Georgetown and then I started taking a class at Georgetown and we were in the same class, which was a surprise to me and then he took me home. I didn't have a car, I was, so he drove me home and then we just liked each other right away.

**MM:** Aw, that's sweet.

**AS:** It was very nice, it was yeah, it really was.

**MM:** How long did you date before he popped the big question? (laugh)

**AS:** Um, about three months.

**MM:** Oh wow! That's way different.

**PA:** Wow!

**AS:** (laugh) It wasn't very long but then we were engaged for a year because then I decided I would go up North and teach. I sort of wanted a little more action than the Library of Congress, and he was still in Georgetown so, we waited until he got his Masters and then we got married.

**PA:** What papers did you say he was working on?

**AS:** Clare Boothe Luce.

**PA:** I don't know what that is. (laugh)

**AS:** Clare Boothe Luce was a representative in Congress and she, she was a remarkable woman. She wrote plays. She wrote a play called *The Women*, which is still produced sometimes and she ran for Congress and she was the wife of Henry Luce who was the operator of Time magazine. You've heard of Time magazine?

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** He was the big, I don't know if he founded it but he was the editor of it and she married him. And she went, she was very pretty as well, she was a beautiful woman and so she got a lot of publicity. She's a Republican. (clears throat)

**PA:** So he was working on it?

**AS:** And prominent people often will donate their papers to somewhere and they, she, donated. She was still alive, but she donated her papers to the Library of Congress and there were, you know, boxes and boxes of stuff and she had also supplied money to have them cataloged. And so he had, he was working under that grant, as he was still a student, a graduate student, but he was working on those papers. As well yeah, so she was very prominent in her day. (pause) Yeah that was a nice romance. (laugh) I mean Washington is the most beautiful city. Have you been to Washington?

**MM:** Yeah.

**PA:** Yeah I've been there once.

**AS:** Oh I loved it.

**MM:** Just to walk around is a perfect date. (laugh)

**AS:** It was gorgeous. It was such a romantic place.

**PA:** The architecture is really nice.

**AS:** Yes, and the spring is beautiful.

**PA:** Cherry trees. (laugh)

**AS:** It's a great place for a courtship.

**PA:** Did you go in the White House garden area ever?

**AS:** No, but I walked around the Capitol a lot. I lived on Capitol Hill. I could see the Capitol out of my window. I lived in this place, it was such a funny place. It was called the Young Women's Christian Home, (laugh) which sounds like an orphanage...

**PA:** Yeah it does. (laugh)

**AS:** And it kind of was...

**MM:** Or a convent. (laugh)

**PA:** (laugh) Was there dating in the convent? (laugh)

**AS:** It wasn't Catholic, it was Baptist and it was this, it was a very nice building, it had a...and you could have a room there and you could, it served a breakfast and supper and they had a beautiful garden and public room. It was like a dormitory, it was a dormitory basically and it was pretty cheap and I was, I could walk up the Capitol Hill. I could walk like 3 blocks up to the Library of Congress, you know, work. So, so I lived there and they really didn't have a lot of restrictions, it was just, it was for working women, so we didn't get in trouble I guess, I don't know. (laugh)

**MM:** Wait can I ask another question?

**AS:** Sure.

**MM:** How did your husband propose to you?

**PA:** (laugh) You're so romantic. (laugh)

**MM:** I guess so. I don't know I just am just intrigued by it.

**AS:** Well I don't know, he just sort of, we were sitting there and he just sort of, you know said, I don't even remember him saying any particular word, something like, you know, do you think we could stay together or something like that, and I said yeah. (laugh) Lets. (laugh)

**PA:** What difficult transitions did you go through in moving from childhood to adulthood, other than having to play catch up in school, if any difficult transitions?

**AS:** I think I was very immature. I think I'm still immature. (laugh) And my daughter says I live in a dream world, I don't like to face unpleasant things. I guess nobody likes to face unpleasant things but I'm very good at, at um, not facing them. I just think I was kind of immature and it took me a long time, to grow up and still does. And, and life is an interesting thing you probably perhaps noticed, it's like a test, it's like a series of challenges. Something for your destiny class.

**PA:** Yeah, exactly. (laugh)

**AS:** I think, I really think it's a series of challenges and as you go along, you successfully negotiate some of these challenges and then, there's more, there's harder ones, different ones. And so you constantly you know, meeting challenges in life and you have to face up to them and do them. But they keep getting harder, or maybe they don't keep getting harder but ...

**PA:** You get more exhausted. (laugh)

**AS:** (laugh) ...you get tired. I don't know.

**PA:** What memories do you have of significant historical events that took place when you were growing up?

**AS:** Very good, good question. I remember President Roosevelt, that death, President Franklin Roosevelt's death. I remember it well because he came into office in 1933, and I was born in 1933. So he was the only President I ever knew until he died...

**PA:** Oh yeah, and he was president for several terms.

**AS:** Four terms. So, (cough) early into his fourth term. So I don't know, maybe I was nine or ten or something like that and my family was Republican so they didn't like Roosevelt at all, which was crazy because he was great, but they didn't. So I remember when he died, you know, the whole place was in mourning. I told you about the Vietnamese War, that was a very big thing. I remember V, VD Day, Victory in Europe, the Second World War. Yeah, it was in the sixth grade and I had a very good teacher and I was too young to feel so much about the war, you know. And maybe I'm shielded from it but I don't know, I remember the Second, I do remember rationing and all that kind of thing. But I had a very good teacher in the sixth grade and it was in June, I don't remember what day in June, maybe June 6 or something and they were gonna have this big invasion. I don't know if you know a lot of history but the, (cough) invaded German, they came across the English Channel, all Allied forces were in England. The big Armada came across and that was kind of the final push and our teacher kept us informed about this so, we were kind of excited. We didn't have television, we had radio but she would have maps and she would show us and then the final day of entry in Europe. And then when they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, was an awful day, I remember it very well, um, it was August, it was terrible. And they, you know, the news came over, you know, we didn't have a television, we had a radio, about this terrible new weapon and they had dropped it in Japan and they had killed hundreds of thousands of people.

**PA:** Were people like, your family and friends, were they glad about this or were they disgusted?

**AS:** No, it was an awful thing because we knew it would end the war and there would have been a long war and a lot of casualties but on the other hand we thought it was awful, this terrible new weapon and they dropped it and they killed cities full of people. It was a very mixed feeling.

**PA:** You didn't know that it existed until they dropped it?

**AS:** No.

**PA:** Wow, I guess I was under the impression that, I mean, was that just you being a kid or did no one know about it?

**AS:** Well no, only a few days before I, I believe they warned the Japanese and I'm not sure if we were aware of that but the United States government told the Japanese they had this terrible new weapon and they were gonna drop it if they didn't surrender and of course, they didn't surrender and they dropped it. So I remember it well but it was very mixed, right from the beginning you know. We were glad the war was over but we knew this was going to be a terrible thing for the world and it has been. I guess it has. Well it was the only time it was ever used.

**PA:** Luckily. (laugh) Knock on wood. (knock knock) I think this is plastic.

**AS:** I remember the Cold War very well. And that, that really hung over my whole life almost, it was really interesting. I remember well, I remember the Cuban Missile Crisis but I'm going on and on, am I?

**MM:** Oh no, no.

**PA:** No, I don't have any more classes for the day, you don't either right? Okay.

**AS:** We were living in New York in a little apartment, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, you know, when, you know what I'm talking about, when Kennedy was the President and they thought that there might be nuclear war because they had these nuclear missiles, I guess, or some kind of missiles in Cuba where they could easily send them up to the United States and Kennedy faced them down. (cough) And really we were very scared, particularly New York, cause this is gonna be prime target, you know, I'm sitting there in New York, (laugh). And I remember her saying my God I don't know what we can do about this, maybe we can store some water, (laugh) because maybe there won't be any water. Maybe the -- I don't know, so I think we stored a little water.

**PA:** Because that would definitely be your first concern (laugh) after being hit by an atomic bomb, what are you supposed to do? (laugh)

**AS:** I don't know, but it was, yeah...

**PA:** Like after September 11<sup>th</sup> my parents got money out of the bank and hid it in their sock drawer. It's like, you know if they drop a bomb on us we were not gonna be like, let's get the money out of the sock drawer. People just have to feel secure.

**AS:** I know, it was very, very tense in that and it was tense almost my whole life. My God, um, after the Second World War, from the 50's, we were always afraid of Russia, we were always afraid of Russia. And I couldn't believe, it was such a great thing when that wall came down, you know, and the Soviet Union just collapsed in 1990. It was so incredible, nobody ever thought that would ever happen. I never thought that would happen in my lifetime. I thought that would go on and on that Cold War, forever and ever, it was remarkable. And what a mess we made of it after that. (laugh)

**MM:** Do you remember where you were when JFK was assassinated?

**AS:** I do, I was right in my backyard in Holden and I had three little kids, and I was out in the backyard, you know, and they were playing around and one of the neighbors came up and, he was, he was like the, there's always one on every street, there's a neighbor who, often there's the person who thinks he's big and he kind of talks to everybody and reports if there's something wrong or whatever... we had this man on our street, Mr. Mayo, and he came up and he came into the backyard, I mean, he came looking for me, (laugh) to tell me that Kennedy had been killed. I mean I'm glad he did. It was better that he told me, I guess. My husband was away, my husband was down in New York, he was doing something with his dissertation because he was working

on his dissertation and so he wasn't even home. And it was a terrible event cause we all loved Kennedy, we really did, he was a remarkable president. And very witty, he was so funny, gave, it was an interesting press conference. So I remember, I remember all these historical things.

**MM:** That's a lot of history in one lifetime.

**AS:** Um hm.

**PA:** Is that off?

**MM:** Oh no it's still working. [referring to the tape recorder] (pause) Um, do you have any hobbies, in your business? (laugh)

**AS:** I'm a great, I'm a gardener, inside and out. I'm a compulsive gardener. (laugh)

**PA:** A compulsive gardener. (laugh)

**MM:** Oh here we go, confessions. (laugh)

**AS:** I am. I have my house full of raggedy plants. (laugh)

**MM:** Did you learn that from your mom or your dad or you just took it up when you got older?

**AS:** No, I think it's, I think...both my father and mother liked to garden. My father was an extremely good gardener, but he had vegetables and he grew a lot of vegetables and my mother was an artistic gardener so she like to have flower gardens and...

**MM:** It's a perfect combo. (laugh)

**AS:** But they have different styles and I can't reconcile their styles in myself. My father liked, he was an excellent gardener and he liked to grow anything, anything at all, but then he got tired of it. He'd grow something and he would be very successful and never grow in again. (laugh) So he liked to experiment and my mother always was big on the artistic stuff and so she was always moving the plants (laugh) to get an artistic effect, (laugh) and my father, ah, can't you leave a plant in the same place. (laugh) So I tend to do both.

**PA:** So you're a restless gardener? (laugh)

**AS:** I'm not a great gardener because I just, if I was like my mother I could just, you know, do the artistic stuff, it would be wonderful but I, I get bored with it and I want to try new plants and I'm like my father in that. (laugh) My gardens are never grand, but they're, to me they're interesting. (pause) Did you ever go up to Tower Hill?

**PA:** Yes, actually.

**AS:** Isn't that great?

**PA:** Yeah, have you been there?

**MM:** Uh, Tower Hill?

**PA:** It's a botanical, botanic or botanical garden.

**MM:** Is it in Massachusetts?

**PA:** Yeah it's pretty close to here.

**AS:** It's in Boylston.

**PA:** Like 20 minutes away maybe.

**MM:** Oh that's not far at all.

**AS:** It's beautiful. They have a lovely Christmas display soon. It's a, it's an indoor place as well. They have beautiful gardens but they also have something called an orangerie, which is like a great big green house with um, orange trees and flowering things in the winter.

**PA:** That's kind of cool.

**AS:** They've just opened another building called the Lemon Building, Lemonair, Lemonair, [Limonaia] or something, they have similar but lemon trees, so it's very nice, if you get a chance.

**PA:** That is a very nice place. I've only been there once but it was really beautiful.

**AS:** We're very lucky to have it here, we really are. There's none in Boston.

**PA:** It's true.

**MM:** How do you get through tough times, what's your coping mechanism?

**AS:** It's very tough, you know, (laugh) there are, and everybody has tough times, you know, it's universal, it's unfortunate, but we all do have them. I think my faith helps a lot and I try not to feel sorry for myself. I say, everybody has tough times, so get up, and do something. (laugh)

**PA:** Good attitude.

**AS:** So I think you have to keep active. I think exercise is really, really important and in all times but particularly in tough times because you just feel better, when you exercise. And then I'd go into my dream world of course and I'd read or do something like that, do puzzles.

**PA:** Relaxing distractions. How do, how do you define success in your life and has this definition changed overtime? I realize these are kind of vague questions but you know.

**AS:** I don't know if it's changed overtime. I told you I thought raising children was the most successful and important thing. I think in the nursing field, having that great opportunity to really change the curriculum and change at least the nurses who came to Anna Maria and changed their education and tried to broaden it. That was, I think, a great success. Students certainly thought so. What else? I don't know, those are my successes I guess. And getting my doctorate at an advanced age was a success and a thing that most people wouldn't even bother doing.

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** But it was very useful, you know it's very interesting, education. Even if it doesn't look very applicable at that minute, at some point it will be. I never had a bit of education that didn't work out, even if it didn't look like it would at the moment.

**PA:** Okay, um, (pause) well there's three more I mean, how do, I feel like this one was kind of answered here, to some degree. How do you feel about the choices you've made in your life? Do you have any regrets?

**AS:** Not many, I don't think, um, there was a great controversy when I was going to college because my mother wanted me to go to Vassar College, which is a very high toned women's college and I was admitted to Vassar College, but I wanted to go to the college in Albany which was a teacher's college of no great repute or anything and I prevailed in that, I went there. I think that was the right choice, I really do. (laugh)

**PA:** Well that's good.

**AS:** That was strange, other choices. Going to the University of Virginia was a, certainly an eye opening choice for me, a whole other lifestyle, a whole other kind of society, and a whole other level of education. Certainly marrying my husband was a really good choice. Worked out very, very well. Having six kids was a good choice for me, although a lot of people, my mother, couldn't stand it. (laugh) I'm an only child.

**PA:** Oh!

**MM:** Oh wow, big difference!

**AS:** So, she just couldn't, (laugh) couldn't get over that, she and my father. But I, I was an only child, I wanted to have a lot of children. My husband wanted to have a lot of children and it was grand, I loved it. I love it still, it's always interesting.

**PA:** Maybe since she was a teacher all day she couldn't come home to a giant group of kids. (laugh) Going from work to work.

**AS:** She came from a family, I've noticed this is also cyclical, she came from a family of six.

**PA:** Oh.

**AS:** And she had to have a lot of responsibility I think for taking care of them and then her generation didn't have many children. I only had seven cousins, or six cousins, out of six aunts and uncles. And so then I was an only child and then I noticed that the next generation had more children so my cousins had more children and I had the most, six. But I, that was a choice and I, to me a great choice. Although even yet people will say, oh my God you have six children, you know. Not socially very acceptable, (laugh) at this point, really.

**PA:** Well.

**MM:** They don't make cars for six children.

**AS:** People look askance at that. Even I think in my day, you know. But to me it was the right choice.

**PA:** Although reality TV loves people with 20 children so...(laugh)

**MM:** See that, my goodness.

**AS:** Right. (laugh)

**PA:** Sort of popular, if you want to be a service child.

**AS:** (laugh) Odd characters.

**PA:** Yeah. (laugh) Um...

**AS:** Becoming a nurse was a good decision, hard decision, um, but, worked out, I think I was meant to do it, really.

**PA:** So, it says do you feel that you have a legacy, I feel like that coincides with what were the successes in your life but if you?

**AS:** I think it does coincide, I think very much. I don't know that I have any other legacy.

**PA:** Okay, and then, yeah, so finally, based on your life experience, what advice would you give to women of today and future generations?

**AS:** **Follow your gut. The things you really want to do. I think that's when you're successful, the things you really want to do, and that's often just a gut feeling,** I don't know why but I'm sure you've experienced this yourself. Sometimes something doesn't look like it's the right choice but you have this gut feeling, this is what you should do. I, I strongly believe in that, and there's actually been some research about it that, we have this intuition, which is based on experience and understanding. (cough) It works so fast we don't, it's not a conscious process, but it works out to be a gut feeling.

**PA:** That's kind of why I went to this school. (laugh)

**AS:** Is it really?

**PA:** Yeah.

**AS:** You had a gut feeling to come here?

**PA:** Yeah, I mean, like, it wasn't the, well, this isn't my interview... (laugh)

**AS:** Never mind, we can just end with it. (laugh)

**PA:** You know, well, it's not like the most, maybe prestigious school and it's not, I mean, it just, a lot of people, when I say Assumption College, go oh, you know. It's just here but I really liked it a lot from the beginning. I really enjoy going here, I'm just really happy. I think it's the right school. Do you feel the same way?

**MM:** Yeah, its like a gem in the rough kind of thing, nobody knows about it but it's the best school I think for me.

**PA:** I think so too, like...

**AS:** That's good to hear.

**MM:** Yeah when you went here did you enjoy it?

**AS:** I can't say I enjoyed it a lot. (laugh) This was a, I wasn't here like an undergraduate, like you are. This was like a continuation, Continuing Ed, I guess, program so it was taught at night and it was hard. We had four-hour long classes, can you even imagine?

**PA:** I can't even do the 90 minute classes without coffee. (laugh)

**AS:** Four hours long. I mean I met some nice people but it wasn't the most enjoyable experience (laugh) that I ever had but it was good and I'm glad I did it.

**PA:** I don't blame you.

**AS:** A nursing education is very, very, very hard. I mean it's a lot of science and all that, you know, a lot of memorization and it's a tough life. But, generally speaking, following your gut, I think works out very well. When I went to Anna Maria, my husband didn't want me to go there. I was working at Mount Wachusett Community College and I had a nice position there and they had an ad for a director and I don't know why, I just had this gut feel I had to apply for that, and I got it. I -- and it wasn't a very rational decision but it worked out for me very well because I got to shape the (laughs) curriculum which I had not had the chance to do before. So I don't know, I haven't had any gut decisions lately.

**PA:** Maybe you should make some. (laugh)

**AS:** Maybe something will come up that I'll have to make a gut decision.

**PA:** Decide what to have for lunch, just follow your gut. (laugh)

**AS:** (laugh) Well I'll do that, yeah.

**PA:** So that's all the questions that we have on the sheet, would you like to tell us anything else?

**AS:** I feel like I told you everything. I don't think I have anything else to tell you. (laugh)

**MM:** And is there anyone else that you would think would want to be part of this type of interview of recording their oral history? We just give this, you don't have to name anybody, but if you had anyone in mind we could write them down.

**AS:** I do have someone in mind, but she lives on Cape Cod but she'd probably come up and be interviewed if people were interested.

**PA:** Oh, I think it has to be women of Central Massachusetts.

**AS:** Well she lived in Central Mass, she lived in Boylston for a long time and she's just retired and taught at Anna Maria and Clark University. I think you'd find her very interesting.

**PA:** What's her name?

**AS:** Alice Smith.

**MM:** Oh that's easy to write.

**AS:** It's very easy and I guess I'll email you her email address cause I don't have it right on me, and you can see. You'll find her very interesting, she's a doctor of social work, but she's, she's had an interesting life so you know, if they're looking for somebody else, then she might be...

**PA:** Yeah I think they are always looking.

**AS:** I think she'd be willing to do it and she's a very articulate talker.

**PA:** Good.

**AS:** Okay.

**MM:** Thank you very much.

**PA:** Yeah it was really nice to meet you.

**AS:** Thank you very much, I enjoyed, of course I had fun, everyone likes to talk about themselves and their lifestyles. (laugh) Lots of fun, for me. (cough) Very good, good luck with your work. What year are you in?

**PA:** Freshmen.

**MM:** Yeah freshmen.

**AS:** Oh okay, oh good, well you have some nice years ahead. College years are so much fun I think.