

Interviewee: Josephine Truesdell
Interviewers: Delaney Fenton, Natalia Kaczor, and Sydney Vu
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Transcribers: Sarah Bodzinski, Delaney Fenton, Natalia Kaczor, Lauren Reddington, Sydney Vu



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Abstract: Josephine Truesdell was born in 1954 in Worcester, Massachusetts and has lived in Worcester her entire life. She has lived a life of service as a teacher to young children, a grief counselor at Children’s Friend, and a volunteer/member of multiple boards within the city. In this interview, Josephine stresses the importance of family and discusses how Worcester has always been a place with influential women. She encourages future generations to build relationships, as “It’s all about connections and being open to them.” Furthermore, she mentions how she did not grow up in a household that made women feel inferior to men. She elaborates on how she became a kindergarten teacher at Bancroft School and underscores her love for what she does. Although she is challenged by her job, she welcomes the different children she encounters. Throughout the interview, Josephine reflects upon her upbringing, life, and plans for the future.

SV: Ok, so the first thing that we wanted to do is talk to you about explaining why we’re doing this interview. So it says that, “We are completing a citywide oral history of the lives of Worcester women, aiming to collect stories about a broad range of experiences. And based on the goals of the 1850 National Women’s Rights Convention in Worcester, we are focusing on the areas of women’s education, health, work, and politics and community involvement.” And we want to focus today on your experiences with education. That’s one of the focuses. And thank you so much for your help with this important project. So, at this point, we would like to ask for your permission to record your oral history—well, it says using your name and the date, basically. So, Josephine Truesdell, September 24th, 2016. So do you give us permission?

JT: Yes I do.

SV: Ok, great! So now we can delve into the questions.

SV: I kind of already said it, but what is your full name, including both maiden name and married name, if applicable?

JT: So my name is Josephine Rose Lincoln Herron Truesdell. [laughs] Did you really want all that? [laughs]

SV: No, that’s fine. That’s perfect.

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JT: So Josephine Rose Lincoln. Herron is my maiden name, and I could tell you a story about that, if you want. My name comes from Joseph Rose in Antigua, a family name, many generations ago and he had nine boys and they all died basically at birth and they were all named Joseph Rose. Then they had Josephine, a girl who they called Josephine Rose and decided they better get out of Antigua so they came to this country; they came to Salem. So when I was born my father went, and this is my mom's family, went to my grandmother for whom I was named, she was Josephine Rose and said, "We are naming our daughter Josephine Lincoln Hern." And she said, "That's no name at all," because the real name is Josephine Rose. That was the original name. So that's why I have both Rose and Lincoln.

NK: From which country did your grandparents come from?

JT: Basically Great Britain. They actually came on the Mayflower.

SV: So you said that's your maiden name?

JT: So Herron was my maiden name, and my dad was from Ohio, but my mom and all her family, they had all grown up here, in Worcester [Massachusetts].

SV: When were you born?

JT: So I was born in 1954... in Worcester... I'm old. [laughs]

SV: Wow, so you stayed in Worcester all your life, huh?

JT: I have and it's great.

SV: Have you ever been married? And, if so, what is the name of your husband?

JT: So I am married and his name is Huck, well Philip Truesdell, but he goes by Huck. And so we married in 1980 and are still married! Very happy.

DF: Where does the name Huck come from?

JT: Huck comes from when he was little. He actually grew up next door to my cousins, which is kind of funny. So I did meet him through them and so he always says that he married the cousin—instead of the girl next door, the cousin of the girl next door. But anyways, he was the youngest of his siblings and of my cousins so they had a name that he didn't like that much. He didn't like it, and so they said, "Well what would you like to be called?" and he was five years old, and he said "I want to be called Huck." And since five years old the name stuck. So it's really funny. It's always been Huck. [Interviewer asks for spelling clarification] You know what it really is—you guys might not know *Huckleberry Hound*. So he was five years old at the time,

he now enjoys *Huck Finn* a lot. But when he was five he didn't know about *Huck Finn*, but he did know about *Huckleberry Hound*, which is like a Disney, Mickey Mouse kind of thing. [laughs] So yeah Huckleberry, so it's nice. So my cousins were like, "Sure, we'll adopt that name. It's much better than Drip."

SV: So sorry, just referencing back really quick. The date of your birthday? Do you mind giving that?

JT: [1954]

SV: Ok. Thank you.

DF: Do you have any children?

JT: I have one son and he is... 33.

DF: And grandchildren?

JT: No. No grandchildren.

SV: Not yet anyway.

JT: Not yet. Yeah, he's not married... yet. [laughs]

SV: So the next question's more about cultures or ethnicities you identify with. Like, basically family background and I know you already mentioned Great Britain basically. But, any—

JT: Right, right. Probably the WASPiest of the WASPiest. That. Yeah. Yeah. The old white Anglo- Saxon, Protestant. Yep, yep, yep.

DF: So we already went over about your parents. Is there anything you want to add?

JT: As far as their backgrounds also, you mean?

SV: Yeah, sure because it says, "Tell me about your parents?" so...

JT: My parents were great. They're (honest?) people. My mom... she grew up in Worcester. And her father died when she was five in 19... 23. And her mom—my grandmother—was a really strong woman—sort of woman. It was sort of interesting, because it was kind of a matriarch—my mom's family was because they had, in my mom's family there were—she had two older sisters. And then there were about six years, or seven years, and then a brother—a son was born and then my mother. So they had sort of like, these two sisters had, they were... you know? Waldo and mom were quite a bit younger. And so they grew up a little bit differently. So

all of the women in the family were very, very strong. You know, sort of very outgoing, vibrant persons. And they—and as I say, the dad died early and... and then the—so my uncle was kind of surrounded by women in his family (_______??). We were like, “Oh my God. Poor Uncle Waldo!” He was such a fabulous person. And he was the father of the cousins next door to my husband. And just a fabulous, fabulous person, but all these strong, you know, really strong women—but—but what a great role model my grandmother had for her children and she didn’t work. (_______??) You know, but she did a lot of community—one of the things that she did was—she had to—she was on a movie censorship committee when—or whatever it was, when movies were first coming into town and—but I always thought it was kind of funny because—cause she’d bring my mother, age six, you know (_______??), to watch these movies, and she was going to say no those are not good for children. But they have always been very, very active in the city of Worcester and with a lot of different organizations, Children’s Friend and the Worcester Art Museum. My aunt worked at the art museum forever. She was curator there and during the war, she was director of the museum. So it’s kind of neat. I sort of feel very connected to the city because of all of the organizations are really important to me as well.

And my dad grew up in Ohio and as he says, he grew up thirty five miles south of the extended Mason Dixon Line. So it was a very different area that he grew up in. Came after the war, it was World War II, he was in the Navy, but then he went to architecture school and that’s where he and my mom met, because my mom was working at Yale, New Haven. So when he came to Worcester with mom he just (_______??) “My gosh, this is where I want to live,” because the architecture was just so spectacular. And of course mom at that time was like, “I want to get out, I want to get out.” As much as she loved Worcester I think that she in some ways kind of wished—you know she would have loved to live in New York or something, you know? But dad just embraced Worcester and then became very involved in the preservation of the buildings and what not in Worcester.

So it’s kind of interesting he also—I always thought it was really interesting that he also sort of embraced mom’s family history too, which is kind of interesting also. I think in some ways he ended up knowing more about mom’s generations past than she did. But he loved Worcester. So then my mom died very suddenly, she was (_______??) I guess she was young. It may not seem that young to you guys but it was very young, now I think it’s even younger. And it was sort of interesting because she died, she had just had a dinner party the night before, it just happened to be with very, very dear friends of hers, sometimes life is interesting that way. And there had been a dance in Worcester, I don’t know, all this stuff. But anyway, the next day, there were some out-of-town guests—this doesn’t make sense at all but anyway, they left and mom and dad went to the movies. They never went to the movies but they went to the movies and left all the mess at home. And she died at the movies. It’s so interesting because it was like doing all wonderful things that she enjoyed doing, she was that kind of a person. She just loved life, and that was kind of the right way for her to died sort of quickly, not being ill or anything like that. My dad on the other hand, he lived until he was 93, we lived with him for about twelve years at the end of his life. And he—he was one of these people that it was okay for him to sit and read

and not worry about getting out and things like that the way mom was. She needed that, she was such an outgoing person, that she loved that liveliness and what not and dad was okay, he didn't mind having that quiet time at the end of his life. And he went the way he needed to go to. He died at home and he had,--which scared me at first I was worried about what it was going to be like, and it ended up being beautiful. It sounds funny but it ended up being beautiful, so it was nice. But anyway they were great, they were great people. You don't always see eye-to-eye with (_____??). We soon learned not to talk about politics with my father.

SV: That's all you can ask for. Make sure they go peaceful..

JT: Yeah, I was really lucky and it gave me a real, you know, hospice was involved in the end. And I don't know it was just that they were really fabulous and for something that was so scary for me because I was just, you know, really interesting, it seems funny to think of it as a beautiful experience. But it kind of was.

DF: We are going to talk about Worcester in general right now, and where you grew up. So what was your neighborhood like generally?

JT: So this is kind of funny. I have always lived in Worcester, but I have moved a whole lot in Worcester. The two places I really grew up—one was on Haviland street, which is where Doherty High School is now [interviewer asks for spelling clarification]. And I went to Lee Street School. I could walk. Lee Street is closed now. But we used to walk. I don't know how far it was, but by these standards today it was quite a ways. But we walked to school. And then we came home for lunch and walk back to school after. [laughs] It's really funny when you think about it and it was—just a—you know, we used to play...do you—do you know Beechmont [Street]? Do you know...

DF: Yeah, I know.

JT: ...because it was kind of near Bancroft Tower, kind of near that area, anyway, but we used to—we'd play outside all year, you know. Of course we grew up in the time when, you know, you'd go outside after breakfast and when the lights came on, when the streetlights came on, you had to come home and we had a big porch and we just, all the neighborhood kids- and I was the only girl, at that time I was, my sister is eleven years younger than I, but there were my two older brothers and myself and then everybody else seemed to be boys in the neighborhood, you know? But we used to play this *great* game where you'd go up to the top of the street and as soon as you saw some headlights of a car you'd have to run, run down to where our porch was and if you didn't get there fast enough you were frozen, or something like that. It's that kind of stuff that we used to do all the time and I remember one time there was this great older couple—they were probably my age now [laughs]—but anyways, they lived across the street, the Spauldings, and one time, they just piled us all into the car and took us to Friendly's and got us all double-dip ice cream cones and [laughs] ...we were, just—it shut us all up. So, it was kind of a, we were a very family-orientated neighborhood. And then, my dad was an architect, so he wanted to build,

wanted to design a house for us, and so he—Butternut Hill Drive, which is, actually, it's not too far from here, up Salisbury Street, he designed a house there, but the house wasn't built in time, so we - the contractor died, there were a number of things that happened—and so we had sold the house on Allen Street—we had moved out of Allen Street, so we moved in with my grandmother and my mom's two sisters, my aunts. They weren't married at the time, and they lived there. My aunt, actually, got married when she was 65 and that was cool, first time, and—I know, it's sort of cool—and my other aunt never got married. But anyway, they lived with Gah, my grandmother, and right by the art museum, actually, so we moved in with them and oh my gosh how my grandmother—I loved it—it was just, the house was up to a good standard because I mean [laughs] we were fairly rambunctious children—especially one of my brothers—but anyway, it was great. One of the things that happened is that I couldn't go to Lee Street because it was going to take- I was in fourth grade, and my brothers continued Lee Street because it was just, they had like one or two years left, but I would've had to go to a school that was not a really, not a particularly good school. Actually, it was not a good school at all. And so, my grandmother sent me to Shepherd Knapp School, which isn't around anymore, but it was an independent school in Boylston, and it was just a great, a really really great school. I was very fortunate enough to go there. So I went there from fourth to eighth grade and that was great. And then I went to Bancroft, actually, for high school. But after being at my grandmother's for about a year and a half, we moved to a house that my dad had designed—we lived there until I was in college. So that was another place that I grew up. That wasn't as much of a neighborhood and we were a little older. Anyway, it was great. People used to always come there, so it was all glass, it was really a fun house and that was where, sort of all, where all the friends all came [laughs] it was kind of fun. So I don't know if that answers your question or not.

SV: No, no, it definitely does. Yes, that's great, wow. You've moved to different places, but all within Worcester.

JT: Yup, all in Worcester, yup, and kind of kept the same from around and yeah.

DF: Do other family members live in the same area?

JT: So, they wish they did. I have a brother in Cambridge and a brother in Winchester, both in Massachusetts. And my sister, who is eleven years younger than I, lives in Chicago.

SV: Since you know Worcester so well, and you can say a lot about it, what challenges do you think the city still faces, and what would you change about the City if you had the jurisdiction to?

JT: Well you know I think that, well you mentioned education, and I think that is definitely, well actually I think there is a strength and weakness to everything. And I think one of the strengths of Worcester, incredible strengths is the diversity that is here and it's just so wonderful. I don't think that the school system has necessarily figured it out yet. How best to—when you think of Elm Park for instance—[Elm] Park Community School having like 80 different languages or

something within the school. And that's hard for the school to address and what not but, it's also such a rich environment. And it's exciting, and I think that—I wish that for not only Worcester but everybody. And I should not say this because I don't teach in the public schools, but the MCAS [Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System]. That kind of thing when you are putting everything—children and schools and even teachers I think, it's a make or break situation upon whether or not they pass the MCAS test or not.

In the meantime I think, and this is one of those things I feel really fortunate about. You know teaching in an independent school is that, I can allow the children to learn know, have it come sort of... internalize their learning a little bit more. As in I don't have to teach to a test and so things can flow a little more naturally. And I think that is probably the thing, and again not just Worcester. I think that's my intent you know? So I think that is a tough thing in Worcester, otherwise I am just so excited about City School Square, I mean we moved a little while ago, about five years ago. And if that had been done we, I would have moved downtown in a heartbeat. At that point absolutely, and I think that, I feel really, you know when you mentioned the challenges of Worcester I think actually there are just so many opportunities is what I look at. I think the challenge is getting it all to happen you know because it's like common you guys, you can do it, you can do it! You know? But the vision is definitely there and I think, what I have noticed is that young people, moving back, young people not leaving. You know there is a really vibrant much more vibrant now for the young people right out of college and what not, and I think that's fantastic. I see kids who are graduates from Bancroft that are staying you know, or coming back. And I think that is a wonderful thing because that was not happening for a long time. I mean when, I mean granted this is a long time ago, but all of my friends, not all but most of my friends you know took off from Worcester in the mid-70s they didn't come back here after college. "Like what? Are you kidding?" But it has changed so much I mean, the heart and the feel is still the same, you know, and the organizations are still strong and everything like that, but I think that it was...there wasn't really anything to do as a young [laughs]. And you guys probably know that very well. But it feels as though there is much more now, well there is definitely more, I don't know if it feels like enough.

But I think one thing that we never did, Worcester hasn't done, is taken advantages of the colleges and universities. And I think—and I never really thought about it as a town-town thing, just sort of growing up it just felt like you know, that was the—you know, there was no antagonism or anything. I didn't think there was, maybe there was—I don't know. But it was just this whole separate thing that was going around, you know (_____???). Now finally, the city is I think is embracing the colleges and universities. You guys would know better. But I think that we're realizing "Oh my gosh!", you know. Worcester is so fantastic to have—has so much to offer here. So, you know, people taking advantage of the lectures that are going on and movies, you know and (_____???). You know, all these things. And I've even taken classes here. You know, and I think—I think maybe we're starting to get it you know. But I do think that that has been a big challenge. You know... and I guess I know there's other challenges, obviously there's—you know, prostitution and drugs and all that. And you know, you just sort of hope—but I do think that there's a lot of—there are a lot of social services in

Worcester, and I think it's a matter of just getting people the help that they need because I think the help is here, and it's just trying to get—get people who need that help to either take advantage of it or to somehow realize that it does exist. But, you know people do care—they do care about one another.

SV: [laughs] That's a very good point. And can I ask you just a clarification on the City Square thing you mentioned? You said you would move downtown in a heartbeat if it was there, so what do you mean by the City Square? Are there any good things there now?

JT: So they are building apartments, condominiums, apartments down there. And I think that getting a vital downtown is really important. And I love to—you know, we used to live on William Street right by Elm Park. And it was so great just to be able to walk—I mean I didn't walk to work but I could walk everywhere else. I mean I could walk to the market—I mean. And it was so great. It's so great if it could be—one of the challenges of Worcester is the public transportation. I mean there just is none. I mean there's some but—and I mean, I get it. I don't take it. But one of the things is if Worcester—if the City Square is downtown, works the way it's intended to work—you know, we'd have eighteen hour day. That there'd be restaurants down there, marketing down there, people down there. And then there's so much music—there's so many things going on down there with Hanover and Mechanic's Hall and the Palladium. I mean the DCU Center—I mean there's a lot happening and down at restaurants. So I think it would be just a really fabulous place to live. One of these days we might—but you know, it would be fun. I know of at least one 30-year-old I know who's moving in, possibly some friends of ours also—you know? I mean and others know. So it's kind of interesting, you know, what a great thing to have those two—you know, the younger and the older people. That is what you love, or what I love. It's that mix of ages and stages and what not and to all be living together, its great. So, yeah hopefully, well that is happening so that would be fun.

DF: So kind of switching gears right now, what do you think women's experiences have been like in Worcester generally?

JT: So, I think that, when one looks around at some of the leaders in or... there are a lot of women who have sort of been like movers and shakers in Worcester. I think that of course for a long time that was not necessarily—they were sort of hidden behind their husbands and what not but I don't necessarily think that is the case now. I don't think that has been the case for quite some time actually and I think that Worcester, and again, we can go back to those 1850s. You know, I really think Worcester thinks some of that is carried on. People think that Worcester is a place where you can stretch yourself out a little bit and push out the edges, and I have never felt as though women have been—I mean I think there has been a place for women, and the big businesses that used to be here. They were man-oriented for sure. But I think that in the nonprofit world and what not, there are a lot of strong women leading those, on boards and as directors and what not and I think that that is a very important piece. It may be partly the way I grew up, I mentioned I grew up in sort of a matriarch. So actually the women, not that I am, but the women have been fairly strong and my family and it's never been this situation where as like, “Oh no,

stay home and iron your socks,” or something like that. So, I did not grow up, feeling like women—my two aunts they were never married, they worked, they did, I mean that has always been a part of the world I grew up in so I never felt as though it was kind of a put down to women. [whispers] That’s just my experience.

SV: We will just move on to education. That’s the next focus. So the first question to ask, you already touched base on this a little but, where did you attend school, and if you could just list the names of the schools?

JT: The schools? So I went to the Natural History Museum for nursery school, and the nursery school went from nine to eleven and my mother said that the parents had to come in and take our winter clothes off then put them on before they went home. So really it was only like an hour in between that time because it took so long to put the clothes on and off and you could only be there from nine to eleven. But anyway so that was the Natural History Museum, where the Ecotarium is, now our science museum, but it was downtown Worcester. And then I went to Lee Street School from kindergarten to third grade, great memories of Lee Street School. Wonderful, wonderful place, lots of friends still from there. And then Shepherd Knapps School in Boylston, from fourth through eighth grade, fabulous experience there as well. And then I went to Bancroft for high school, and then I went to Middlebury College.

SV: Ok, and we might double-check the spelling of those things just to make sure we got them. Ok, so you said Lee Street School—so L-E-E Street School? Ok, and I heard Shepherd Knapps School? [Interviewee spells out school names]. Bancroft, and Millbury—M-I-L-B? [Interviewee clarifies and spells name of college]. Middlebury? Oh my bad. Oh I see. Yeah I didn’t know you went to Bancroft for high school. But it makes sense. Right. Because it was all female—school at one point. Oh no no no.

JT: Bancroft? You mean Bancroft?

SV: Bancroft, yeah. It was—

JT: Bancroft, was all girls when we (_____???)?. Yeah. Mmm hmm. Yup.

SV: Yeah, yeah. Wow. Came back to it too.

JT: All girls, and (_____???)?. All girls just from ninth to twelfth grade, it was coed through ninth grade well it was actually coed through eighth grade and then they had ninth grade boys. This is a little bit funny you know, talking about women and things like that. Bancroft they used to stop boys had to leave after eighth grade because many of the boys went to boarding school or something. And then the high school was all girls. In the late 60s they started to have ninth grade boys. They were of the middle school as opposed to part of the high school, upper school, where the girls are. And we weren’t supposed to talk to them. I mean it was just really funny. You know, it was just a different period of time [laughs]. So, but we found ways to talk to

them anyway. But they were very nice. And so it's kind of funny, but then yeah.

SV: Very different now. Very.

JT: Very, very different now. And fortunately. Yup, yup, yup.

DF: When you were in college, what did you study?

JT: I-I went up there to major in French, possibly in Math. Wasn't too sure. And (_____???) majoring in Religion. They had a really great religion department and I just—you know, it was so great because, you know as a religion major it was, you know history, psychology, everything. You know, sociology, you name it. It was really fabulous.

DF: In what year did you start college?

JT: Did I start college? [Cough in background] 1972.

SV: And then you graduated...?

JT: 76.

SV: Got it.

JT: And I knew I wanted to—oh sorry. Go ahead.

DF: Oh, no. Go ahead.

SV: No, go ahead.

JT: I knew I wanted to teach, and I—so Middlebury didn't have a—you couldn't be a teacher. They didn't have a... you know, whatever.

SV: Education major? Yeah.

JT: Education major. Thank you. And—but you could student-teach and what not, but because I was a religion major I wanted to be a—teach in middle school, junior high but because I was a religion major that you had to be a normal major like math or something to teach middle school. I did an internship with six grade instead so that would be elementary ed and then I did some student teaching in fourth grade. And so when I graduated I knew I just wasn't really ready to go out and have a job. So I called Wy [Wyatt] Garfield who is the head of Bancroft and so I said to him (_____???) [mumbles] “Is there anything I could do over there?” They were looking for an assistant in the first grade so I went and did that, just for a year. Then a kindergarten job opened up the next year and I have been teaching there ever since. So it's really funny and

teaching something quite different than what I anticipated, you know teaching kindergarten. Developmentally kindergarteners and middle schoolers are kind of similar. And you look at them, you know, on any development chart, so there's something that's intriguing and I think probably what intrigues me about middle school is what intrigues me about the kindergartners.

DF: So back to your education, what were your challenges in education?

JT: What were my challenges? Probably being quiet in class [laughs]. I used to get—I had good grades, but then whenever there was something, you know any opportunity for a teacher to say, “Yeah she’s laughing in class or she’s talking in class, or she’s doing whatever!” But I had been very fortunate to have really good teachers all the way through. I felt very comfortable with them, maybe too comfortable at times [laughs] But I had—the reason why I had ended up stopping math in college is because—actually that was a big challenge. Yeah, I couldn’t keep up with that at all. And it was really interesting because I just thought one more day and I’ll get it [laughs]. So I—you know, of course there were challenges, but I have to say I really loved school. You know? Going all the way through I really did. I was just very fortunate and you know, a lot of the friends that I have now are people that I kind of went to school with. Through each of those—who are not so much at college, it’s interesting. I mean I have some good friends from college, but—and whenever I see my friends from college it’s great! But as far as my very dearest friends are, you know, people from before college. I don’t know if that’s weird or not. I have no idea, but it’s funny. But I feel like in a lot of—you sort of knew the kids in the grades ahead, the grades behind. You know, you sort of have that breath of—because most of the schools I went to were very small too, and that was good. I wish I could tell you other stuff, but...[laughs]. I know, I was real fortunate...

SV: ...no, that’s great...

JT: ...Now my teachers, if you talk to my teachers, they would tell you something entirely different, like ‘what?’

NK: Two different perspectives.

JT: Yeah, right! [laughs] When I came back to teach at Bancroft, of course, there were a lot of teachers there, whom I had taught and I’ll never forget, you know, going into the faculty room, and there were these teachers that you just knew you could call by their first name, you know, it’s just like that, you just knew that you could. And then there were these teachers who you knew you could *never* call them by their first name, and so that was maybe easy too. But there were *all* these people in between, I had no idea what to call them. It didn’t seem right calling them mister and misses, didn’t seem right calling them by their first name, so it was like sort of a very—I remember that sort of, so that was hard. But, yeah, no. I’ve been really fortunate, [whispers] even though there were some *bad* times. I didn’t ever have to worry about prom, because we didn’t have prom, you know, so that was good.

NK: Really?

JT: Yeah, that could probably be a beautiful thing.

NK: There was never prom?

JT: We didn't have one, no. You know, it's interesting, you know, because it was an all-girls school, and we used to—we'd have mixers [laughs] ...

SV: ...wow, bringing that term back...

JT:...it was really funny, everything that you could imagine with it is absolutely right, normally. Everybody trying to figure out who's who. But anyway, yeah you know, because it was all girls also, we used to, Worcester Academy was all boys, and we'd often do plays with them, which was great, you know, and whatnot, and musicals, especially. But, yeah...

SV: Did you—I know you already kind of talked about how you, like, found work at Bancroft, right after college. But, when you graduated, what did you see as your options? Like besides teaching, I know that's what you wanted to do but...

JT: Well yeah, you know, the thing is—it's interesting. I used to live this pathetic life, because, I really did want to teach, and I did know that. And so I knew, I never felt I was, that I had to teach because it was a role thing to do. Never, ever felt that way. And I think—but it was something that I was drawn to, always was, and I think partly because I had a younger sister, that I always used to ram stuff down her throat. "I'm going to get you to read, whether you like it or not!" but I—you know, I just truly wanted to, probably because I loved school so much. I mean, you know—but I *never*, I really never, but now I wonder, now I'm thinking, "What would I want to do next?" Right now, now I'm thinking, "Okay. Now what am I doing?" because now I've taught for forty years and so now it's, "What's next? What do I want to do?"

When I was graduating from college, it was that I knew I really wanted to teach. One thing that was kind of interesting is that year, after I was an assistant in first grade—of course, sending out applications, and things like that, for teaching, and of all places, to Chicago, living at my sister's, and I'll never forget being out there. So, I was twenty two, or twenty three, whatever, and had a great interview, with this person for some third grade job, and whatever it was, I don't know. And you know, when they were telling me I wasn't going to get the job, a week or so later, he said, "You know, we're looking for a young person with experience." And I kept thinking, "How can you have a young person with experience?" I just couldn't—and then I was twenty eight. And twenty nine. And I realized, "That's what it is." And then you have, you know, four or five years of experience and you're still young. [laughs] But you know, when I was twenty two, oh boy, I was like, "What?" [laughs] 'How can you be both young and experienced?' And—but—so that was a bummer. That was—you know. But of course things work for, you know—out for, you know, often times the way they should.

And I'm really glad—I remember after having—I had been at Bancroft for about five years or ten years, or something. And I remember saying to my cousin that lived next door to my husband—anyway, you know, this is—I should still be teaching at the same place that I went to high school. (_____) really bad. And he said, “Do you love what you're doing? And are you challenged by what you're doing?” And I think of that all the time. Because whenever I think, “Oh my gosh! Here I am. I'm still here, still here, still here.” But, I love what I do and I'm challenged by what I do. And, you know, that—I think those are the things that, you know, keep on going. Every day is new, every day is different. As you know, working at that age, you never know what's going to happen. [sounds of agreement] And, you know, it's just you always have to be, kind of (_____) you know. And I like that. And they, you know, (_____) In all this time, I'm always seeing children that I've never seen before. [sounds of agreement] You know, I mean it's so—and I think that's a great thing. And so it is always challenging, and I do—I do love it. And I—so I have never felt trapped; I guess that's what the question really was. And I've never have ever felt trapped at all. And I do now—not feel trapped—now I'm thinking “Okay, now what am I going to do?” because, you know, Huck is at the point where he's—I think he's gonna be retiring, maybe in the spring, he's thinking about that. And I'm—I don't know how I... 62, or something like that. And, you know—so whenever I retire from teaching—you kind of think, “Okay what's that next step? What am I going to do?” And I look forward to that. And I'm thinking something really different would be great. You know? I mean I wouldn't be able to pp gas, because I don't know how to do that. [laughs] But, you know, there are things that—I'd like to do things that's not maybe... as stressful! [laughs] But yeah, it's exciting!

SV: Yeah!

NK: Do you have any ideas—I know you said something that's not too too hard but what are you looking at? You want to share some insight?

JT: Right! Well, you know, I often wonder about—I'm not kidding about the gas, I thought that'd be fun—light [laughs] no, but I—the libraries. That would be something I'd love to do. I don't have a degree in that, so I don't know. And I wonder what it would be like also—I think—I wonder maybe like working like in a store or some—I don't know, like the museum gift shop or something. [laughs] [sounds of approval] I mean you know, something where you're seeing people because I would definitely want to see people. I would not want to be, you know, doing something that's—yeah. But if you're young (_____) the museum gift shop, or Target. I don't know! I'm still thinking (_____) that's where you're seeing people and you know, you're day ends when you (_____) [laughs]. That would be good too! That's not the case now! And—you know, which is okay. But, you know, I don't know. Those are plans—I also think I'd like to—I've been there—I mean (_____) not too far from the craft center. I think it'd be really cool to—I'd love to take up pottery or something. Things like that also, they're just so cool. So I really, you know, I look forward to things like that. And I did—I have—looking to the future at what I'd be doing—one thing—a couple of years ago, I

started working—volunteering—at the Children’s Friend, working with—in their grief counseling center. The Carriage House, I don’t know if you guys are familiar with that. It’s a really great organization. So I work with children whose mom or dad or sibling has died. And that’s been—that’s something that I would want to continue. So whether—whatever it is, my next step is—whether it’s volunteer or you know, job at I don’t know. But [mumbles quickly] it’d be nice if it were a job-job. But I definitely—you know, you want to plan that—not plan it, but I mean I’ve never been one to plan that (_____??). But just to have some things in place. I wouldn’t want to find myself—because I don’t think—Huck would be a much better retired person than I could cause he’d, like, do stuff. Clean the house—you know, he’d be—I could just see myself sitting around reading a book [makes noise and gesture] because that’s what I love to do. And that would be silly and so I have to *know* kind of where I’d plug myself in.

DF: Going off of that...

JT: I don’t blame you. Yeah. [laughs]

DF: So what were/are some of your primary responsibilities in terms of housework and childcare?

JT: So now, my husband does almost ALL the cooking! [laughs]

NK: Wow, that’s great! Where’d you find one of those?

JT: I know it! I know it! Well, he lived next door to my cousin. [laughs] But, you know, he cared more about what he eats than I do, and he’s a great cook. And, you know, I do most of the vacuuming. But, you know, we actually—it’s a very—share it all, always have. It’s never been an issue of anybody feeling—I don’t think, although he may feel it now! No, but we’ve always, you know—childcare, you know, with Sam growing up, because both of us have always worked. And so it’s always been, you know—you know, we’ve never done anything like, ‘Okay, you do this. I’ll do this.’ It’s always been—we do a lot of the stuff together. You know? I mean, we’ll cook together, we’ll... you know which is—you know, but I’m usually a sous chef (_____??) sous chef. And—but, you know, he’s a—Huck is a—just a really kind person. [laughs] I am very fortunate! And—so yeah, he’s never, never, you know, been any...yeah.

NK: The key to a long-lasting relationship... sharing everything.

JT: [mumbles] Very fortunate. I know. [laughs] You know, and nothing’s ever rosy all the time! Yeah, I mean, you know. But yeah. And Sam is, our son, is grown up, kind of I think that he has—it’s very funny because there are always things that, you know, he’ll talk to Huck about or he’ll talk to me about, like [whispers to demonstrate an example] I get more about Julia than he does—but you know. But it’s funny, you know, how those—you know, he has—we all have a very close bond together. But, then there’s that, you know. It’s so funny. You know, he’ll talk to

Huck about jobs and he'll talk to me about this. You know, it's funny but, yeah. I think we're pretty close and we've—you know, probably the hardest time that Huck and I had was when we were living with my dad actually. You know, because that was, you know, sort of—you could never have a normal conversation, you couldn't just be, because your dad was there. Wonderful, wonderful person. It's just different in the things you talk about with your husband and you can't talk about, don't talk about, you know, when your dad is there [laughs]. But, [mumbles], I used to do all the mowing, when we lived in Hartwick, but yeah. [laughs]

SV: So I have two questions for you, right now, so the first one is what support networks and mentoring have been important to you?

JT: In terms of mentoring, did you say or no?

SV: Yeah, yeah, like, what support networks and mentoring have been important to you in your life? It could be like your family or certain teachers that come to mind.

JT: Right, right, absolutely. And I would say that it's, well, actually I, [hesitates], the person that I rely on now more than anyone is Huck, I will say that. You know, there's no question about it. He's been that support system, [hesitates], especially, especially as we've gotten older. You know, I think when Sam was little or we were going about that, then we had other, you know, but other than that, I would say it's my siblings. For sure. They, you know, we again for different, in different [hesitates] you know just the way I was saying that there would be people, times when Sam would talk to me, or talk to Hack, or something like that. I have these three great siblings, and I have, my relationship with each one of them is a little bit different. You know, and I also have a cousin that I spend a lot of time with, but they really are the people, I'd say family, that have mentored me over the years, and I, not to say that I haven't had friends or teachers, but [stutters] my family truly has. I was lucky, but my grandmother. Every Sunday, she used to have all of us come for Sunday dinner. And I had, so there was [stutters] my mom—it was my mom's mother—and so our family, and so, and Waldo, my mother's brother, and his family. And, when you spend that much time together with family and stuff, that was, that really kind of *clinched* it for us. We're kind of—whether they would ever consider me a mentor, I don't know, but in some ways, I kind of think they would, too. Because I kind of think it goes both ways. But I think that over my life, those are the people that have been the strongest, have been my go to people.

SV: That's great, yeah. You can always count on family. [coughs in background] The other thing, was... about you as a teacher. I really wanted to delve into this just because you've had such a long career with it. So, what has this work meant to you, being a teacher?

JT: And now you're going to make me cry! [laughs]

SV: It'll be good for the interview, go ahead. [laughs]

JT: Ah, you know, I now have a child, who was one of my students in class, the son of a former student of mine. [gasps in the background]. It's funny how things happen. But, when that happens, it kind of, I don't know, it just, I know what it should do is make me feel old, but what it makes me feel like is like, "Good! I'm glad he's sending his child here." But I don't know. Working at Bancroft has been great, especially because of the Pre-K to 12, it goes through twelfth grade, so I see—I mean, you know, last night I was at the [Worcester] Historical Museum and Jake Friedman, I don't know if you remember him, but anyway. He's a senior there and I had him in class and he [?]. It's just so nice that, you know—and I think that the connections that one makes with these kids and *continue* to see, watch as they grow up. I mean it's huge. I mean, to see these kids come. And they're there, the same people that were in kindergarten. [laughs]

I have to tell you that that's a good thing, and one, I had an email. Just, *totally* out of the blue, one day, from this student, whose name I remember, but I don't know if I should say it, but anyway, Jerry was the first name. But anyway, he said, "I found your name on the Bancroft website, and my child is five, a five year old daughter, and I'll be singing the same songs, you know, teaching her the same songs that I learned in kindergarten." So, there is *no* question that when they come back, I remember. You know, as a teacher and that's a long memory, so that's pretty good. But the connections, there's no question about it. The connections that you make with the children, with their families. I feel as though it's—again, that community, and I think the parents—I feel very strongly in working in a partnership with parents. It's vital. Absolutely vital. And so, we've been fortunate enough, at Bancroft, that I think that that connection happened and can happen at any school. I'm glad that can happen there. But, I think that working in a partnership with parents, on behalf of their children, is probably what I think has really meant a lot. And the children, they are *so* unique and I always feel that there's a child, with problems or misbehaving, or whatever, I used to say, "Okay, what am I doing? Why is that happening?" It's not, "I've got to figure it out." It's not that the child has to figure it out, I have to figure it out how to get to that child. And so that's that puzzle, that's what keeps it always exciting I think, "What can I do?" And I don't know if that answered your question.

SV: No it does. I was just going to follow up by asking would you say there are any cons to your job? Any cons, like any negatives? Because it sounds like you are living the high life. [laughs]

JT: I know it does, doesn't it. You know that's the thing that's so weird is that... this is the thing that is really bizarre about right now because it does sound like my life right now is like this perfect, and it's not. But I guess I just focus on the positives you know. It's so funny I'm going to go home and go I can't believe what I was saying [laughs]. No, it's all true, but I do tend to look at the bright side, so anyway. So cons of the job, probably a con, and this is really interesting to because I think it's happened with technology. Or with me, I don't know what it is. But it's that it's a twenty four seven job. I mean it does not stop. And I think I only mention technology because of course I taught for many, many, many, years without email, and without all that and I think that technology has kind of put a little bit of...because it's so quick for people to email and say "Oh Suzie Q had an argument with Sally Q" or whatever you know and can you

fix it. Parents would not necessarily call up they'd reflect upon it and let things go. Now everything has to happen immediately, you know. And so, we're at the other end of that email and have to address that right away. And I'm happy to do that but I think that that's, and I think that it is less that it was, I think that is has evaded a little bit the last few years, but there was a time when there was like this *constant barrage* of emails, or just, you know, parents not quite just understanding that children just need to live their lives. Not every day is going to be absolutely rosy, you know. Even though it sounds like it'd be it. But that's part of learning and growing up and whatnot. And, so I think that probably that, just that, and it's *awful* stressful. I mean, it is stressful. Teaching is stressful. It just is, you know and I've had some classes that have been very difficult, and but again, it's like, "What do I do, what am I doing or not doing?" But it's those relationships that you develop I think, when it's a hard, difficult class, some of those are the strongest relationships I've developed, too, so. But I think the con is that it is never out of your mind. It's always just there...

SV: ...Right...Can't shut off...

JT: Yeah, really can't, you know. [mumbles]

SV: Oh, sorry, you can ask a question.

DF: Okay, so how have you balanced different priorities, responsibilities, roles and interests in your life?

JT: So, that's what I haven't done, because school *totally* takes over my life. And if you ask Huck, that's what he would say too. So that, school, does take over my life. And, but, I have tried to make a really concerted effort. I actually a while ago, actually it was really when my dad was sick, actually, when I stopped all volunteer work - everything. I just stopped everything. And, so, I was caring for dad. But then, and school. And that was kind of it, you know, for a while. And then... but now, I'm starting to get back into it, and I just feel so much *better*, too. You know, because it takes your *mind* a little off of, you can kind of get, you can waste a lot of time thinking about school. You know, because really, [laughs]. And so yeah, I haven't always been really good at that, but I am making a concerted effort to balance that, and of course now with, you know when Sam was little, I didn't do a ton of volunteer work. But I went to all the baseball and soccer games instead. You know, and that was great. But now, as I say, I'm getting back into things and it's great! You know, I really enjoy that. Back into the world a little bit, so...

SV: Do you have any regrets?

JT: Do I have *regrets*? [silence] I mean... I guess, you know it's funny, my brother said something about a regret the other day, and I thought, "You know, it's so sad." What's that?

SV: Can you speak up please?

JT: Oh, sorry.... Being regretful, about things. I think, [pause] that [pause]. I guess one of the things I would regret actually is that school took over for some time and I think that my life, I allowed that to happen and had the great excuse of saying, “Well, that’s my job!” Of course, and so Huck would take up the slack, saying he had to be an Bancroft, because Sam came to school with me and he’d wait until like 5:30 or 6:30 o’clock at night to go home. And that’s ridiculous. So I guess that would be a regret that I really did allow. People who can leave school at the end of the school day and go and have their world, and I never could do that. And I don’t really quite know why I—whatever doing this, doing that. But that would be a regret, I guess, you know. I regret that I... I wish that I—I’m sorry that I didn’t have time—more time as an adult with my mom. I was definitely an adult when she died. But I was at (_____???) and stuff like that.

When I think of people who have, you know, that relationship with their parents now. But then again, I’m so lucky to have had her for as long as I did. Many people don’t. So, you know, but that would’ve been—because we had a—you know, she’s my mom so of course we had a [makes noises and gestures]. We had a *tremendous* respect for her. And she’s just fab—an absolutely wonderful person. And I—absolutely. And I wish that—I would love to, you know, see her now. Talk with her, just share stuff. I mean I still, like want to call her up like “Guess what?” you know. Yeah so that would be a regret. But it’s not—but I understand it. That’s, you know—that’s life, you know. That would be—but things that I’ve done—I wonder—I do wonder if it was healthy to stay at the same job for so long. I don’t regret it... at all. I don’t regret it, but sometimes I wonder if that was a—you know, because there were times when I could have left. I’ve never lived anywhere outside of—well I mean, I lived in Hardwick for eight years, but you know, Worcester was my... [trails off]. Never lived anywhere else so far. And it makes me think, in a lot of ways, maybe that has—you know, that I haven’t broadened myself enough as a result of that. And so I guess that would be a regret but then you know, I mean, I-I don’t... I guess the thing is regret would be something that you really wish was different and I don’t necessarily—I don’t think it’s necessarily a bad thing. But—I, you know, have kept the same job and lived in the same place, but I... you know. But I can see that’s probably might not have been best. The opportunities, there have been so many opportunities [coughs in the background] out there. And I didn’t take advantage of them, maybe. But... I don’t know if it’s—maybe I’ll find out.

SV: But the kids. The kids you’ve had all these years. They’re definitely glad you stayed.

JT: Well I don’t know. You’re very nice to say that. You’re very nice. I think that’s the thing that just keeps me there, keeps me going. Because I just, you know, yeah. [whispers] I’ll be thinking about—I’ll get back to you. [laughs] I’ll be thinking about that because I—yeah, that’s interesting.

DF: So moving on to politics and community involvement, do you consider yourself active politically?

JT: So there’s something called the super—there’s something called the super voters. What are they called? Super voters, or something. People who even vote in the primaries when there’s

not—that's—that would be—that would be me. I vote in everything. And I care a lot. But I don't go on the picket line and I don't—and actually the reason for that is—it's a funny reason. Maybe not that funny, but I don't come out politically in school because I don't want to, you know. Faculty, they don't know. You know, I don't tend to write letters to editors and things like that because I don't want to make it difficult for school. Liberal, and I just don't—and I don't want, not that that would be difficult to do, I just want to keep it a little bit separate. And so, I—I've watched every debate, from Republican to—I've watched everything! So I care very much and—about politics and I'm very concerned right now. [laughs] And—but yeah.

NK: Will you be watching Monday?

JT: I might watch Monday!

SV: Is everybody talking about it at Bancroft?

JT: This is the thing that is very interesting this year, is that there have been meetings not in the lower school but with the middle and upper school teachers before school began that had a handle. Because it's so volatile there are and it is just really interesting, you have to be careful on what you say and how you say it and I think I know where most of—we are Massachusetts after all, but there's a variety of bumper stickers on cars and that's okay, and a healthy thing you know. And I think that, this is so unusual and I have never, ever, ever seen anything like this.

NK: Yeah, it's just crazy! (_____???)

JT: And it must be bizarre for you guys to be like new voters, you know and there you are it's like, "Hello, what do I do?" Well I could tell you what to do if you would like some advice but [laughs] it's just I mean, I think there are a lot of people who aren't able to vote the way they want to vote. I know and I think that's a really soft thing. I think we should feel good, I don't always feel great about my vote. You know sometimes it's a vote, you know but you know over the years I mean you know, but I mean Wow. I feel, I hope my vote counts this time.

SV: So on talking about volunteer work and your involvement in the community, would you like to talk to us about that?

JT: Right, so as I mentioned that I have and I sort of like, you know, put it on the back burner for a while. But getting—I you know I'm getting back a little bit and that's good, and so Children's Friend is something I have been doing for a few years. And I am very involved with the Worcester Historical Museum, also the board there. And there are some things that I do that—well I'm also on the board for the cemetery. And I have been the advisory council for planned parenting, but not anymore. But also I do Shakespeare club nights—next Monday night unfortunately [laughs]. And that's a great program that has been going on for hundred, hundred twenty-five years and that's really fun. And you just get around doing Shakespeare—well I guess that's not really fun, but you know. It's an ongoing—it's been an ongoing thing in Worcester

forever, you know and it's just really cool. I think those are my—you know I was on members council for the art museum, but I'm not now. So I have been involved in a variety of things over time and it's great! It's great to be back and I have always been a supporter just by going to things like Tower Hill and Antiquarian Society whom I am a member of.

But anyway—but it's great. Worcester has such a great nonprofits or-organizations are so strong, you know. And when you think about having an Antiquarian Society here in Worcester, this incredible library and the art museum, I don't know if you guys have had a chance to go there, but it's just amazing. I even bring my kindergarteners there every year. You know, it's just a neat, incredible place—has a great collection. So yeah I think that is one of the things that makes Worcester so unique is that all of these—the Ecotarium, the art museum—are just gems. You know they really are. These are not so expensive that you can't—you know, you can't get around the art museum in one day, you know and that's so great. And I have to say the other thing is so great I tried to, you know get—you know go to things like Stone Street. I just love all of these free things that happen in Worcester, you know at some point along the line you were asking something about Worcester in general, and I think one thing the families that I have who moved to Worcester—those families are saying that they love Worcester because there's so much to do for children. And I think that is so much free, you know like Stone Street and I think those are real pluses. I try to be supportive. I try to talk up Worcester, but it's not pretend. I really do like Worcester a lot.

SV: Can I ask what led you to join those organizations and what their main goals are?

JT: Mostly—but I've always been a member of the organizations and I think that you want to help out where you can and I never—I can't do a lot financially for organizations I don't have—you know, I teach school. [laughs] So if there are other ways that I can help out I try to and I'm happy to and I just do what I can. I never felt as though I could do that much, but the particular organizations they—yeah they tend to kind of you know—a friend who is on the board that they call, you know, somebody that I've known or someone I know I don't mind going out and saying.

SV: Do you want to discuss your role in religion?

JT: So I grew up going to All Saint's Episcopal church in Worcester and my dad was an Episcopalian. Went to Sunday school, went to church, loved it, thought it was great. And my mom was a Unitarian so she stayed home and put the votes in. Got married in a fiscal church, loved it, sang in the choir loved it, loved it. As I say, we got married in a church, but Huck wasn't gonna be—was like, “Neil, are you kidding?” and so we actually became—we actually—well we don't go now, but Unitarian is what we have been since we have been married. And went religiously but haven't for the last couple years not for any particular reason except, you know, whatever. But I think religion has—I mean it's funny, I say my prayers every night just to myself, nobody would ever know that. I mean after being married for the longest time he was saying something to me and it took me a while to answer. He's like “What are you doing?” I'm

like, “Saying my prayers,” and he goes “What!? You're saying your prayers!?” [laughs]. And it's like we have been married for like ten or fifteen years but—so I have—I can't—I don't know if I would call them strong beliefs but, you know, I have—I know there are many paths to whatever it is you know. And I so—I think about it a lot. It is on my mind, but I don't have organized religion. Isn't right now a huge part of my life. (_____???)

DF: So we are going to move on to health. How have health issues impacted your life or those in your family?

JT: So I've been very fortunate regarding health and I have not been good about going to the doctor. I don't go because they weigh me and I don't—I have not been good about religiously going to the doctor. But I go to the dentist all the time. But I think that I have had family members who have been sick and I think, of course, those periods are hard. Again I think of my dad when he was diagnosed with leukemia. We knew he had six weeks to live. What he said was, “Let's have a party,” and so we did. I think that I sort of—it's not stoic but I sort of have grew up in a family that kind of—this—you kind of deal with things. You know, and that said, you know, there was a time we were very worried—it was a very brief time that her son had bubonic plague. But it was—thank God. But, you know, there have been fears like that and I always—I do worry about everybody in my family all the time. But we have been very fortunate that, you know, there hasn't been severe things so far. But there hasn't been things that are life changing at this point. But I try to when there are people, you know, who are—I try to be there for them, you know, and support in whatever way you can, but yeah.

DF: What are your experiences in accessing quality affordable healthcare?

JT: So I'm lucky in that as well because I have it from work and you know I—right now I am not doing it through my work I am doing it through my husband from the state, so we have always been able to have healthcare and it has been okay for us. But we are just about to be Medicare though so who knows what that will be like, but we have always had it through work.

DF: Whose health are you responsible for besides your own?

JT: I, my husband and... you know that's why it's better if he cooks.

DF: Alright now we're just going to...

JT: Over time there have been other people, but right at this moment it's him.

DF: Okay. So now I'm just going to do some conclusion interview questions.

SV: So one is, how do you get through tough times and what kinds of thoughts keep you going?

JT: So I cry [laughs] and I talk to—or sometimes I keep it in actually—I do that too but I talk to

my husband and he's a great supporter and if it has to do with him, sometimes I talk to somebody else. [laughs] but I actually I do tend to keep a lot inside so that's not very healthy. So now we go back to your health questions. I do tend to keep a lot inside but it's a little nice because I just kind of, you know sometimes if you just dwell on things, I don't know, it's just I just try to put it and keep things in perspective and again I am just very fortunate to have a husband because I can haul off on him [jokingly makes cat noises] and I have a very dear friend from forever. And my siblings [laughs]. So I talk, I will talk too. I have gone to a counsellor with Huck when we were living with my dad, and he found that very helpful. He found it very helpful, but he was funny, yeah it was great. But, anyway I came home crying all the time you know it wasn't always fun but I think we did that for six months or something like that. And it's a good thing, you know that's always a helpful thing and really we know sometimes there are times when—because he actually [mumbles] kind of wonderful person but you know we just can't live this way anymore with my dad and so I said, 'But how can we not?' So we did go do counseling during that period and you know sometimes if you just are talking it out with someone there to listen you just kind of come to some form of you didn't know that that was happening. But it was healthy too, it gave Huck a chance to share his thoughts and struggles because it had to have been so hard.

SV: Yeah, it's cathartic.

JT: Yeah, it's very cathartic.

SV: So how do you define success in your life and has the definition of it changed for you over time?

JT: Over time.. Hmm. You know I think a lot of—I guess it's kind of--[pauses] oh my gosh. I think it's wrapped up a little in... it was wrapped up in our son for a while. Like that single perfect child whatever you know? And then he rose up and suddenly we realize you know it's not about you, you kind of have to reimagine what your role is. So I think probably... and it sounds stupid but I think success—Huck and I are there together and we are happy [laughs]. But just, you know, and that family is—family becomes almost more important the older you get [laughs] and I'm going to start crying. So I guess that success for me would be that, and I don't mean intact family so that you can't have people who divorce or nothing like that, it's just that, that feeling that connection and I think that I'm so glad that my extended family is successful. So success, I guess success has always had to do with family actually. Whether it's Sam or now you know it doesn't really have anything to do with my job or my money or this and that. Is that weird? Success is family? I don't know [laughs].

SV: I completely understand. I get it. I do, I do.

JT: I just never really you know I think I would have thought about that but you know... success in one's life. Yeah...

DF: That's a great answer. So going off of that what advice would you give for women today

and of future generations?

JT: I think it's relationships. I think that's what it is and I—and it doesn't have to be a relationship with a, you know, spouse or anything like that. But I think that—and it's not you—you know my dad said to me one time, because he's speaking to all of us, I mean, I remember just growing up he said, "You know, you'll have many acquaintances, you'll have, you know, some friends and very few confidants." And I just think that that is so—is such a great—is so much in fortune that I think—because you know, you don't want to be laying all your troubles on a whole lot of people when you have this confidant. You know, whether it's your spouse or, you know, your friend growing up or your whoever—your cousins. You know, whoever it is. But then at the same time, you know, you want to have these—you have a lot of—because they're going to broadening because, you know, I especially—new experiences to have, you know, just those connections! It's all about connections and being open to them. And I think in a place like Worcester that has such a wide diverse population, I think that we're so lucky to be able to have some connections or to be able to build relationships with so many different people who had different experiences. And I guess that'd be my advice. Just to build those relationships with them, you know, an alliance.. it would be strong and alive. Just be confidants.

SV: ..that's okay you can end it.

JT: And marry Huck! [laughs]

DF: Now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women that has been recorded in the past, what should we be sure to include?

JT: [laughs] Can you... so now you've told a story what should you tell of women in the past... [trails off]

DF: No with your story what should be include?

JT: Oh *my* story?

SV: I guess like what are the take away points.

JT: Takeaway points about *me*? I don't think any!

SV: No!

JT: I just... to be honest when you guys got in touch with me I was like why do they want to talk to me? I just am a regular person you know and I guess maybe that would be the takeaway I guess is that you can just be a regular person and you don't have to do something that looks big. You don't have to, you know, whether it's your having some fancy job or anything like that you can just try and be a good person. And, you know, hopefully- oh I don't know! But I don't know

I just the takeaway about me I just don't know. And I've been very fortunate and I know that. I really truly do and I don't take it for granted. But I know and I think that to have and to go back to family you know a lot of—I'm always so impressed when I have families in class or meeting people who come from another country and you know left that country to come here. It's like, wow the strength that takes and the impact that it has on them because they're not with their family and how fortunate I have been that I have family. But it doesn't mean that you can't have that love in their lives I mean it's so enriched—they get to go back to the I don't know I don't know what I'm saying. I have no idea what I'm saying, no idea at all [laughs].

SV: That's okay, that's fine.

JT: But yeah, there's no take away.

SV: So to answer the last question then. Is there anyone you would suggest we talk to?

JT: Oh I! Now! Oh my gosh I should think about that and let you know because... tell me what what are you really looking for? Because I know you're not looking for people like me—

DF: —No stop it!

JT: But what-what—because I will—I'll be happy to think of that.

SV: Sure!

JT: I mean I probably won't give you a name now but what-what-what is your, I mean I read what your mission was, but who would you really like to talk with?

SV: I think it just, based off the fact that this is the Worcester Women's Oral History Project, probably impactful women of Worcester in areas like education, volunteer, work, politics, you know people who just made a difference like a couple of women that have interesting things to say. I know like you said, you've grown up in Worcester your whole life. Born and raised so.. Maybe...

JT: I'm thinking there is a person who may already have been interviewed and I just—I mean she's Jane Dewey... She's like eighty five.. [trails off]. She's just like on top of it I mean and she—I think she'd be so great because she's so much—I mean she knows more about my family than I do actually because she's been researching it, but she's a really fantastic person and came here in the late forties because she married somebody whose family had been here forever. And she embraced Worcester and done a ton over the years and she might be someone interesting and she's very politically active. Has been over time and so I'll think about some other people. Is there a list of people that you have already done?

NK: You're the only one.

SV: Yeah you're the only one. Everyone in our class we divided into groups and they have their own specific person.

JT: Huh, scary! You're kidding! Oh my god! I can't believe—where did you ever get my name! Oh my god you must be so sorry. But, she would be fantastic. She would be fantastic. I will be right up front. She was also my very dearest friend's mom growing up, but she would be fabulous. She's really great. I mean if you're interested I can put you right in touch with her. I don't know if she does email; her husband he's ninety. But she-she's—you would love talking to her. And she'll be succinct and yeah she's great. And I will, and I will think of some other people.... I mean there are a lot. I'll send you a list.

SV: Think about it, and just email us.

JT: Yeah I'll email you guys because—so yeah through volunteer through..

SV: Education, politics.

NK: Sciences, doctors, nurses, healthy, anything.

JT: You know what that's going to be more important. I'll get you a list. I'll give you some real people!

SV: You're a real person!

JT: And then if—you know I'd be happy to put you into contact with them so.

DF: Great!

JT: You guys must, I hope you have something really fun to listen to. Holy moly! I can't believe it!

SV: I learned a lot, don't worry!

JT: Oh no! Anyway, anyway, anyways...

SV: Well, thank you so so so much.

JT: No you guys were great. You're very sweet, and I hope that all goes well. It should be very easy to transcribe and all that but good luck to you girls. You seem really like a good.. Like a good—again so happy to be with other people you know that'll be really fun. So is it all year?

SV: Only this semester.

JT: So you're trying to do this pretty soon?

SV: Very much. I mean there's some people who haven't gotten theirs yet so that benchmark's coming.

JT: So would you guys be the ones to interview if I were to give you the names or other people?

SV: No, other people.

JT: Okay.

SV: I think they just want references for people to contact and ask if they would be okay to do this too.

JT: Okay alright. Great, great. Okay, no definitely. I will definitely do that for sure. That's great.

NK: Thank you.