

Interviewee: Patricia Verderese  
Interviewer: Rachel McGrath and Nadia Sweeney  
Date of Interview: March 26, 2013  
Location: Worcester, Massachusetts  
Transcriber: Rachel McGrath and Nadia Sweeney



Overseen by: Profs. Carl Keyes and Carrie Nixon, Assumption College

**Abstract:**

Patricia Lucille Field Verderese was born in 1951 in Arlington, Massachusetts. She is connected to Worcester because she attended Assumption College in the late '60s and continues to reside in the area until present day. The major theme Patti reflects upon in this interview deals with her identity and what events helped shape it. Patti is a very hardworking and dedicated woman as seen by her participation in Assumption College's first class of women. Patti discusses some challenges she faced with her Irish background, being shy, and her political and religious beliefs. She also advises Assumption College and Worcester to stick to their true identities by better promoting themselves. Patti then highlights her belief in the strength in women and advises young girls to stay true to themselves and not to succumb to what men expect of them. She gives advice to women to get a good education because women these days are able to support themselves. At the end of the interview, Patti concludes by discussing her curiosity with the repeating fashion statements that are being popularized again by today's generation of young women.

Quote: "Well, when I first arrived here [in Worcester] in 1969...it was like a bombed out World War II city...And so that was my first impression...But over the years, I have come to realize that Worcester is a very great place...We're members at the art museum and [involved in ] Music Worcester...The restaurants here—you couldn't find any better in Boston...Every time we have a new person come to the city, or to visit us, we take them on a tour of Worcester."

**RM:** Okay, it's recording. Alright, so we're just going to start off, what is your full maiden name and, if applicable, your married name?

**PV:** Patricia Lucille Field Verderese.

**RM:** Okay, when were you born?

**PV:** 1951.

**RM:** And obviously you have married, and so what is the name of your current husband?

**PV:** Paul; only husband [laughter].

**RM:** Okay, that was my next question. Do you have any children?

**PV:** Yes; three children.

**RM:** What are their names?

**PV:** John Paul, Ryan, and Christina.

**RM:** Any grandchildren?

**PV:** Yes.

**RM:** How many?

**PV:** Five.

**RM:** How old are they?

**PV:** Almost seven, four, nine months, three months, and one month.

**RM:** They're young.

**NS:** Yeah, that's so cute though.

**RM:** What cultures or ethnicities do you identify with? Like your family background.

**PV:** Irish.

**RM:** How have your parents impacted you during your life? Have their – what have they achieved in their life that has influenced you?

**PV:** Well, all of my parents – well, my parents and my husband's parents – were all veterans of World War II; and that has kind of shaped my life, in a sense. Like when I was here, like a hundred years ago [laughter], it was during the Vietnam War. And everybody's protesting and this and that. Oh, I had a brother that was in Vietnam; I had military – parents who had been in the military and even my husband's parents. And I felt like their sacrifice and their, you know, was important to the country and the country was trying to do the right thing to help an oppressed people, and then to have people protesting all around it was – you know, I never shied away from a discussion, but I certainly never participated in any protests or that kind of thing. It was a very tumultuous time. And if you talked about it and you said you were in favor of the war – I mean,

who's in favor of war really? But I wasn't against the war. You know, people would look at you, but with my background – I had lived on a military base for a couple of years, too. So, I think that shaped it and my parents are both very hard working people. My father, after he retired, from as a colonel – a lieutenant colonel from the Marine Corps, he worked for the government in Washington, D.C., and my mother was a nurse and, you know, they're just hard workers and we're a very close-knit family and, so, I think those things – being in the military, traveling around – we just travelled to four places. So, those things.

**RM:** So, besides the military base, where else have you lived during your life?

**PV:** I lived in – on Long Island. I was born in Massachusetts. We moved to Long Island, then I lived in North Carolina at Camp Lejeune Marine Base and we ended up in Virginia, Falls Church, Virginia. My father worked in D.C. and then I came up here to college. And stayed here.

**RM:** Wow, that's far. [laughter]

**PV:** I never thought I would stay here.

**NS:** You must have liked it then, if you stayed.

**PV:** Yeah, or you kind of get – you know, my husband got a job, so you kind of stay and you stay and you stay and you stay.

**NS:** I gotcha, I gotcha.

**RM:** And what were the neighbor – what were, like, your neighborhoods like, generally? Where they, I don't really know, were they good neighborhoods?

**PV:** Yes.

**NS:** Like tightly knitted, you know, like, close?

**PV:** Well, the first neighborhood I was too young to really know, cause I moved from Massachusetts when I was five. But I remember my parents keeping in touch with those people in the neighborhood, and I just – just this past fall, I went back to visit one of those people, a couple that they knew, who lived right next door to them, in Lexington. And they did – they were pretty tight-knit, so I do know that, I have visit those people myself because my mother kept in touch with them for all these years. And then in, on Long Island, it was – it was a pretty close neighborhood but it was very ethnically diverse, not so much ethnically, but religiously diverse. Now, we were like the only two Catholics on the street; everybody else was Jewish. And so, that was kind of different for

us. And then in North Carolina, it was a mix because it was military base. But, again, you get close to your neighbors and you get close to people whom your father works with in the military. And then in Virginia, yeah, it was a very close-knit neighborhood, in a sense of – it was a good neighborhood and there were a lot of kids my age in the neighborhood, so we would play – I remember in the summer we would go out and play the games at night, hide and go seek and stuff like that.

**NS:** Oh, that's fun.

**PV:** That was more of a – that was – all the neighborhoods were suburban neighborhoods.

**RM:** Do you think that moving around so much shifted your identity and like what you identified with? Does that make sense?

**PV:** No, I mean, what do you mean 'what I identify with?'

**RM:** Like, do you think that because you were shifting around the state, not the state, the country a lot that you didn't have the time to connect with other kids your age?

**PV:** Yeah, sometimes, you know, I'd make a friend and then you'd be gone. And I became – and I was a very shy – I was very, very shy; I hardly said anything, even when – you know, if it was relatives, 'course we lived in Virginia and a lot of the relatives lived up here. But, I was very shy, I didn't talk hardly at all [laughs]. So, yeah, I think that probably did contribute to not having really close friends. I mean, I have – I know people who have been friends with their childhood friends for like, 50 years. I really envy that, I never had that.

**RM:** I know you said this before, but where are you currently living right now?

**PV:** In Auburn, Massachusetts.

**RM:** Thank you. Okay, do other family members live in the same area?

**PV:** Not immediate family, no. You know, cousins, things like that, cousins live in the Boston area, but no, no immediate family.

**RM:** Do you feel that your identity is strongly tied to Worcester?

**PV:** I suppose now it is 'cause I've lived here for, this will be my 40<sup>th</sup> reunion this year, so I've been in the area – in the area, for 40 years, not in Auburn the whole time, but – yeah, I guess so.

**RM:** And what changes have you seen in Worcester over time?

**PV:** Well, when I first arrived here in 1969, I – we drove up and down the main street in Worcester and it was like a bombed out World War II city; I always tell people that, it was like gray and drab and just – it was just not exciting. And so, that was my first impression: ‘What am I getting myself into?’ [laughter] But over the years, I have come to realize that Worcester is a very – is a, is a great place. And we’ve gotten involved in [coughs], you know, we’re members at the art museum and Music Worcester and things like that, gotten involved in, like, the music world and theatre and things like that. And we go out to dinner a lot in the city. And I think Worcester has really come around from what it was when I was here in college, it was – it really, you rarely went off-campus, it was very rare to go anywhere ‘cause most people didn’t have cars and there was nothing to do downtown. They built that mall, which now they’re getting – you know, they’re demolishing, they built that mall, I think it was about the time I went to school here. So, I don’t know if I finished answering that question.

**RM:** Yup, yeah, I think so. What challenges do you think that the city still faces? And what would you change about the city?

**PV:** The city – the biggest challenge is that the people from Worcester, the natives of Worcester still think there’s nothing to do in Worcester and that it’s a lousy place to live. People live – who are from Worcester usually don’t appreciate Worcester; we tell it to everybody. For instance, I went to a com-Chamber of Commerce meeting once and the guy was a travel expert, you know he was travel guide or whatever, and he was staying at the Beachwood Hotel, you know where that is?

**RM:** I’ve heard of it.

**PV:** It’s down next to UMASS Medical Center.

**RM:** Oh! Okay, okay, yeah.

**PV:** Just across the street. The only first-class hotel in the city. And he, he normally when he goes into a hotel, he goes to the, you know that place where all the brochures are? And he went over to look at the brochures, and none of them said anything about Worcester. They all said about Boston, Boston, Boston. I mean, they don’t even promote themselves well.

**RM:** Yeah, wow.

**NS:** Yeah! Wow.

**PV:** So, we always have to tell people, ‘No, Worcester’s a great place to live and there’s – you know, you’ve got, what, 12 colleges here. The restaurants here – you couldn’t find

any better in Boston. I mean, really, consistently. There's so many things to do here, the people just don't take advantage of – and I can say that for myself. When I was a student here, I don't think I ever went to the art museum. I did after when I was doing my master degree, and now we're members of the art museum. I think you're, as a young person, you may not appreciate it as much, or you don't have time, or whatever. But I think it's – Worcester's challenges are promoting itself to be a great city and marketing itself, they really need to improve that because there's a lot of things to do here; the theatre, the art museum, now, of course Higgins Armory is being – has been sold, you know the collection and stuff is gonna go to the art museum. But every time we have a new person come to the city, or to visit us, we take them on a tour of Worcester. And like, we can't believe all the things there's to do in Worcester. [laughter] So, I think that's one of the big challenges Worcester has 'cause they don't promote themselves well, they don't – they have a negative attitude about themselves. So they need to get, they need to get rid of that. [laughter]

**RM:** Okay, what distinct characteristics make Worcester the place that it is?

**PV:** Well, it's the second largest city in the state, I mean, in New England. It is centrally located to all the major roads in Massachusetts and going east, west, north, south. It has twelve colleges, so you know that there's going to be culture, education that you can – you can go to lectures. We just went to a lecture at Holy Cross the other night. There's music all over the place, every college has music, plus there's so many venues for music; Music Worcester, at Mechanics Hall, the Hanover. I think that it's just a vibrant place, which is like a – almost like a gold mine but people haven't mined it, they haven't – the people that don't know that much about it they need to be, like I said, informed about there is to do here. So again, the central location, it's – the vibrant college life, there's a ton of building going on now with the, what do you call it, the city square project down in Worcester. I'm probably telling you about stuff you don't even know.

**NS:** Yeah, this is really interesting 'cause I'm a freshman, so I don't live in Worcester.

**PV:** I'll have to get my husband and he'll give us a tour. (??) But actually for our 40<sup>th</sup> reunion, I suggested – I think we should take people on a tour.

**NS:** I'll go.

**PV:** So I'm supposed to be working on the tour, to get a map and kind of map it out from here to – and kind of do a food tour too, not total food tour but...

**RM:** Sign me up [laughter]

**PV:** But go to two or three restaurants, like one for appetizers, one for dinner and dessert and along the way show people what there is to do in Worcester, so that's – it's just a

vibrant city with – I’m telling you, you look, if you open the newspaper, on whatever, you know the calendar in it, and you look – it’s like you have to choose, “Oh jeepers, there’s ten things I could do, or there’s five things I could do; which one do I want to do?” There’s a lot of things going on here.

**NS:** That’s awesome.

**RM:** Yeah.

**PV:** So they didn’t take you on a tour of the city when you got here?

**NS:** No.

**RM:** No. I only know from [Interstate] 95 down Salisbury Street to here.

**NS:** I just know from driving around and getting lost. [laughs]

**PV:** 295? You mean...

**RM:** [Interstate] 495, or [Interstate] 290, whatever that one...

**PV:** 290.

**RM:** Oh, okay. [laughter]

**PV:** We’ll have to get a tour go – I think that should be part of orientation.

**NS:** I think so too.

**PV:** Well, the – I thought the [Worcester] Consortium did that. Our nephew is at WPI and I’ve read in the paper that there are tours of the city. Maybe you just didn’t take advantage of it.

**NS:** Maybe we didn’t take advantage of it.

**RM:** I haven’t heard about it.

**PV:** It was at the – it’s in the beginning when school starts and they get the kids to...

**NS:** Oooh.

**PV:** Have you gone – did you go down in September to Shrewsbury Street where there was that dining thing?

**NS:** No I – oh, I did go to that.

**PV:** You did go to that – that was, I'm not sure if that was different than the tour or not.

**NS:** I think there was a tour during orientation, but you could either do that or volunteer at this harvest thing, and I did the volunteer thing.

**PV:** The Community Harvest Project in Grafton?

**NS:** Yeah, yeah.

**PV:** Yeah, I know that too. So see, you missed the tour!

**NS:** I missed the tour, but I volunteered! It averages out! [laughter]

**RM:** Next question: what do you think women's experience in Worcester have been generally?

**PV:** Hmm, what do I think? Well, I think that several of the women in my class have really gone on to do wonderful things. I think when we first came here, we were the first class of women, I was in the first class of women, and it was an opportunity to really – to kind of shine, and I think several people did go on and do great things. I mean, I know (??) is head of the Community Healthlink in Worcester or something like that, Family Healthlink? And Maureen Doyle, she's the person who wrote the book [*Voices of Worcester Women*], I mean, some of these people have really stepped up to challenging times when, you know, women really weren't – you know, when I went to college, most people it was going to be a nurse or you're going to be a teacher, or you're going to be, maybe a secretary or something like that.

**NS:** Yeah.

**PV:** Can't use that word now but...[laughter]. So, I think that just coming to Assumption, being accepted – the priests were very welcoming and I-I don't know, I think it's a great place for women to-to start their – to get started because there's so much going on, so many possibilities for them to participate in whether it's you know, medical, political, cultural, there's just so many-so many opportunities for them to realize their dreams. So, I'm not sure I answered that question either [laughs].

**NS:** No, I think – that makes sense.

**RM:** Yeah.

**NS:** No definitely, I like that answer.

**RM:** Okay, [laughter] yeah, no I liked it. And throughout the years, how do think the roles of men and women have changed in Worcester?

**PV:** In Worcester? Yes, this is the Worcester project [laughter]. Well, I don't know if it's really any different than the country, in general?

**RM:** Mhm.

**PV:** [Clears throat] But, I think the roles are becoming, you know women can do – can do anything they want now, in a sense of, you know you can be a (??) to the Marine Corps, for Pete's sake. Or you could be a nurse or a teacher. But, you know, it's like – it's unlimited possibilities for women now where it wasn't always. And also men have had to, you know they've realized or came together where they had to become more involved in families, they had children, you know the child care and helping out and being kind of – it's not just women's work at home. It's not just your – I mean, so I think-I think it's not just Worcester, but I think in general, women have so many more opportunities. Men are probably, I wonder sometimes if men feel like women are outpacing them in-in their education – there's more women here, I think, than men.

**NS:** Yeah, there are.

**PV:** And I think that's true in most colleges.

**NS:** I think it's 40:60 ratio or something.

**PV:** Right. So I think – and I'm not sure if it's so different from the rest of the country, but again, there's so many colleges here that you know, people have the opportunity to do whatever-whatever they want.

**NS:** Yeah, definitely.

**PV:** So I-I know-I don't know if I answered that question either.

**NS:** No, (??) you're giving good answers [laughter]. Okay, do you wanna just make sure it's still recording? It is, right? Sorry...

**RM:** Yupp (??) [laughter].

**NS:** So, where did you attend primary and secondary school? Or like, elementary and middle school?

**PV:** Long Island and then – for elementary, and also North Carolina. And then I was in middle school in Virginia from 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**NS:** Do you remember the names at all, of those schools?

**PV:** Yeah. Well I remember the one when I was in middle school that was Saint Anthony's, Saint Anthony's School. Long-Long Meadow, I think, in Long Island. And I am not sure about the first – when I was in first grade.

**NS:** Yeah, that's okay. What year did you graduate from college? And what did you get your degree in?

**PV:** I graduated in 1973. My degree was in French, and I had enough Education credits, you know I was going to teach French, so Education and French.

**NS:** Oh, okay. What were your challenges in education?

**PV:** Education? Specifically, not French?

**NS:** No, like...

**PV:** In my whole time here?

**NS:** Yeah, your whole time here.

**PV:** Well I lived in Virginia, and you know I have an Irish background in the sense of - that was my heritage. Well my goal, my dream was to become a French teacher. And I came to Assumption having, you know, I went through high school French, I think it was French 5 and everything. But when I got to Assumption, in those times, in that era, it was just a few years before that, maybe five to ten years before that when all the classes were in French. The school was – if you look at the list of alumni from, let's say the 60s and older like 60s 50s, they are almost probably 90% are French names. Because you had to speak French to be able to come here. So, you know I was at the end of that. So – but I wanted to major in French. Still all the people who came to this school a lot of them were French speaking. And these were French-speaking people who were majoring in French with me. Now these people had spoken it at home, they could speak it fluently at class and everything. So I always felt like I was – had a disadvantage, but in the sense of I would be like “Why did I choose this major, why did I go to this school?” But that's what I always wanted to do. So that was a big challenge that even in my major I was getting Cs because I was – I had taken – instead of taking any under, what do you call them, I started at the like one hundred level, as in the sense – as opposed to the elementary classes or intermediate French...

**NS:** The advanced ones?

**PV:** Yeah. And I remember that was a struggle. And the professors I had, the one professor Father Denis Gonthier, was the hardest professor I ever had, and you know you are kind of always struggling how come he is so hard in snap, but he was always the one that was the best teacher to and the best the one I came closest to and respected the most. And I think that is always true it seems your hardest teacher is the one that made you work hard and but you appreciated that you got more out of the lass then anything. So that was a big struggle for me. Coming here a school with people in my major where speaking French already and I'm coming from French 5 yes, but I didn't speak it fluently. And I remember one semester, I think one of the grades I got was a C or C- and so I was in tears because "This is my major and I'm getting a C-" "So I went and talked to the professor and had all my quizzes everything, and said that I don't think I deserve a C- I think at least a C. So he actually changes my grade. He probably did it because I was crying.

**NS:** Aww now I know what to do – start crying [laughter].

**PV:** But that was the biggest challenge. Also, being away from home. That was a big thing in the beginning of the year, freshmen year being away from home. And at that time, you know I would call my parents on Sunday nights and that was it. You know, it wasn't like I had my phone and I could text my mother to anything like that. So I did have relatives up here, but it's not that I saw them that frequently it was always kind of a backup. As some of the guys, cause we were the first class of women, some of the guys resented us being here because it was an all male's school, and they resented the women being here.

**RM:** That seems backwards [laughter].

**PV:** It was a great time because the ratio of men to women was 7:1. So it was it was like we were trailblazers. It was fun. The guys though, they had to triple up on the dorms, because our dorms where not ready the new ones, the ones on the hill. So they were not too pleased about that they had to triple up. I think we had to triple up too we because were all on alumni hall.

**NS:** Triple in that wow we live in Des [Desautel Hall], I could only imagine.

**PV:** So that was a challenge being away, not speaking French fluently with my major. And there you know, as far as education like with the education teaching French, the biggest challenge for me was taking the classes in education was a total waste of time. Yeah, I just felt like they didn't prepare me to teach. There were a lot of popular theories at the time. Open classroom. I mean you would have a floor like this and it'd be just have chairs around them with maybe a little divider. I mean these were all experiments. It was

just a time of lots of change and experimentation I think that we probably have it all the time. So those were some of the challenges. And in the beginning you know you couldn't get off campus all that easy.

**NS:** Right, yeah, no cars. Upon finishing your formal education, what did you see as your options? Maybe becoming a teacher?

**PV:** Yeah becoming a teacher. But when I first graduated there were few jobs for teachers, few jobs. So we actually moved to Merrimack College where my husband was in student personnel where we lived in a dorm with 300 men. Because we had just gotten married that summer, summer after I graduated I got married that summer. And we moved to Merrimack College where my husband was the assistant dean of students so we lived in that dorm with 300 men. So two weeks after my honeymoon we moved to this. And I did some substitute work in one of those open classroom in schools. And then I had a long-term substitute job for six months in Lawrence, it was an all-girls Catholic school in Lawrence. And so I kept looking for a job, and we agreed that after he finished two years in Merrimack, that we would move where I got a job if I got a job. And so we did. I got a teaching job at in Bartonville, it's up by Gardener, north of here. And I taught for three years and then we moved back to Auburn. Well we you know we graduated from here, moved to the Auburn area, moved back to Worcester or really Gardener.

**NS:** Just throwing this out there, but how did you and your husband meet?

**PV:** At school, here. There used to be this thing called the switchboard, you may never have heard of that. If you go in La Maison, front doors and you go to the left there is a little window a little closet, isn't there somebody there who gives you information sometimes? But it was right there in that little office they had the switchboard. So um that's where all the phone calls would come in. So I worked there and my husband worked there and that's how we met. I was going out with someone else at the time, and I shouldn't have been going out with that person. And then we started going out.

**NS:** How important do you think getting a higher education is for women in order for them to have a fulfilling life?

**PV:** I think it is very important in this day and age. Because what if you don't get married? What if you decide you're not getting married? You have to support yourself. And if you don't have the skill, you're going to be living in one of the projects. I think it's important for - not every person is not meant to be a college student. I mean there are some people who should be training for working at these high tech companies. You know there are still manufacturing companies for you know parts for airplanes and defense things. You know they're talking about how a lot of the young people coming out of school they don't have the skills to do any of these jobs and they have to learn how to train the workforce a little better to fulfill the jobs that are out there. So I do think it is

important, and it is much better to get your education, at least your Bachelor's done before you do get married because after you get kids, it's so hard. It took me nine years to get my Master's here because I would take one class a term and some terms I didn't take one. But now they wouldn't let you do that. It would probably be four or five years that you have to do it or something like that. But you know I had three kids at the time, so it was hard to come back. I always tell people get it now. It's just very hard, and like I said you have to support yourself.

**NS:** How do you think Assumption College has changed since you have been here?

**PV:** Oh well there were like six buildings on this campus when I came here. I don't know how many there are now, 23? But just having don't you do you have two parking lots now or just one?

**RM:** I think two, LLC one and the one by the duck pond

**PV:** Well I mean just having parking garages for students or parents or administration. Certainly larger, got a huge course selections. You know they offer a lot different majors then they had when I was here. You know they have the football field; it's just amazing what is here. The new campus ministry center that's nice too. So I think it is trying to appeal to broader group of people, so they're having all these different majors. I don't know that is necessarily a good thing, we have to do everything of everyone. And I think they are still struggling with their Catholic identity, which I think is extremely important, if they are going to be a Catholic school. You have to be true to your identity in what you say, what you do. Even the professors, who you have come here, you want them to be able to, I mean you want to have a diverse group of people, but if people aren't going to promote what you believe, I just think that's a very hard thing to keep that Catholic identity instinct with that Catholic tradition. So in that way it's changed greatly with like I said the whole landscape of it and the numbering of buildings. There was no, the library was in the La Maison when I was here. So I did my Master's Degree in here. I stayed on third floor way in the back because it was away from everybody. (Laughter) It was quiet and no disruptions because I just needed quiet. And I think that you know people are I think the consortium has developed well since I have been taking classes that was just going when I was going here.

**RM:** Besides being a teacher, do you do any other work outside the home?

**PV:** I am not a teacher now, I only taught for those three year. And then I stayed home to have my children. And when I went back to work I became a Religious Education Director. And I worked the Diocese of Worcester for 15 years, two different parishes. But even before that, I did other things, got involved in other activities, when my kids were little. So I just stayed home. But since I left my job, I don't like to call it a retirement because what would I do. I don't like that word retire, I'm never going to just sit in a

rocking chair. So I do volunteer work. I worked as a volunteer at the Adult Learning Center in Worcester and tutored people there. I volunteered at the music school in Auburn Hatchet Music school in Auburn, Hector Music School. And you know it's a regular place like if you want to take private lessons, there's kid lessons, there's assembles all kinds of things like that. I was on the Board of Directors there for six years and still am involved with their fund raising groups or you know efforts. I also volunteered and still now volunteered at Nativity School of Worcester that's right down.

**RM:** What's it called?

**PV:** Nativity School of Worcester. If you go down the bottom of Salisbury, and you go left you kind of see it off 290. You should be able to see it

**RM:** I recognize the name.

**PV:** So that's what I do, I volunteer.

**RM:** What are your primary responsibilities in terms of housework?

**PV:** Well since I don't work outside the home, I just volunteer, I basically do most of the house stuff. I do have somebody who comes and helps me; I have a housekeeper who comes in. Well she doesn't come in everyday, just once every two weeks. But since my husband works, he has his own business. He works from eight or nine in the morning till he comes home nine, ten o'clock at night. So I'm not going to ask him to do anything. I mean he takes care of the outside I don't do, I do gardening, and I like that. But I don't mow the lawns or fertilize or anything like that. But I do most of the household things, the shopping, the cooking, because I'm not working. And that was my decision, and I mean he wouldn't have time to do anything anyways. He would have me go out to dinner every night, and I can't go out to dinner every night. I just don't want to. But, most of the time I do just about everything.

**NS:** What business does...?

**PV:** He is a financial advisor.

**RM:** How has housework changed for you over time?

**PV:** Well, since we could afford having someone come in every couple of weeks, that's great because I wouldn't be able to do my volunteer work. My house would be a disaster. So because we can afford to hire somebody, she doesn't do everything. She just does certain like the rooms we live in every other week. That allows me to get out and volunteer, and go visit friends. All of my children live in Virginia and Maryland. I can go

down there too and it's a lot easier that way. You know, it's gotten easier in the sense that nobody is there to mess it up.

**RM:** Just on the point on how your children are all down in Virginia and Maryland, how did they migrate down there? From what I understand you raised them in MA.

**PV:** Yes I did. Well, you know I was from Virginia. That didn't really have anything to do with that. But my daughter was looking for a school, and none of them wanted to come to Assumption because they have been here fifty thousand times, you know for reunions and you know they don't want to go where there parents are. And it was too close anyways, and that was fine. My daughter wanted a program that had music; she's a flautist, and flutist. So a lot of colleges don't have something available for you, you have to go find it. So she went to Catholic University, Washington DC. So she's the youngest. My middle son wanted to become a federal police officer, and where do you go, you go down there. So he became a capital police officer special agent. And then our older son went to UMass Medical. He needed to do his residency somewhere, so I figured well his brother and sister are down there, so he might as well go down there to do his residency. So he went to George Washington University Hospital for his residency. Then they all stayed there. I mean I did the same thing to my mother, so I couldn't be mad. And it's not that bad of a distance that I can't get on a plane. We just came back Monday night or Sunday night really was Monday morning from BWI Baltimore Washington Airport to Providence, very quick. Wasn't bad, I am glad they don't live in California [laughter]. So that's how they got down there.

**RM:** How would you characterize a personal and professional cost of your chosen oh okay yeah, how would characterize the personal and professional costs of your volunteer work?

**PV:** Oh, how would I what? What was the word?

**RM:** How would characterize the personal and professional costs of your volunteer work and what are the benefits?

**PV:** Well I don't get what they mean by personal and professional costs?

**RM:** Do you think it adds an extra strain onto your life, or do you stress more or?

**PV:** No, because I'm not working. You know, I have the leisure to. Once in a while there's a fund raiser, fund raising event coming up next week I am trying to get ready for Easter and trying to have to manage that. I feel it had certainly enriched my life. I have learned so much when I was on the Board of Directors at the music school. I mean I am not on that now, but I am on the advisory board just learning about being on the board and how the school remain finishes solvent, getting out there and promoting it. And

tutoring people, it always amazed me when tutoring people from this country or not, how there is such a great need for people to help other people in learning to language because some of these people have such poor language skills. You wonder how they ever graduated from high school, how did they ever get out of school? So I recognize there is such a need for especially literacy training. And I really like that; I like the one on one work with somebody because I think that's how people respond the best. You can figure out what they need and just focus on that. I think it greatly enriched my life. Especially since my family doesn't live up here, I'm not going to just sit around at home all day. I really feel it has greatly enriched my life, I have learned so much about non-profits, people in general, how to relate to people better, how to ask them for money or get them involved in things. I think it's been wonderful and just getting involved in the music school made a segway in joining the art museum, Botanical Gardens, which is up 190 [Interstate 190], and Music Worcester going to regularly going got concerts and things like that, it's wonderful.

**NS:** Do you consider yourself active politically?

**PV:** I don't know if it would be active, because my husband and I are Republicans, conservatives. (Laughter) And it is very hard to talk to people in Massachusetts about politics because they are all liberal and I just feel like 'how did we ever stay in this state?' I just feel like we're in the minority and we want to be active. And there is a good candidate in Massachusetts, which is very unusual, or someone another country, we will send money because we feel strongly that the right people are not getting elected. And we really feel strongly that the country is going in a bad direction. I am very disappointed in this president and I think he is bringing us down the wrong path. It's politically in Massachusetts it's hard to be a conservative Republican. Or not even so much that, a conservative person who has traditional, moral values. You know like in Massachusetts the past three speakers of the House and the State Senate, they have all gone to jail, they have all gone to jail. I mean there's a guy now who has sexual abuse allegations against him, he's the one, and it's so entrenched in Massachusetts. It's almost like a one party state. Even if you had a good Republican or Conservative candidate, they probably won't get elected because there are not enough Republicans here. These people here are just too liberal so it's hard to become elected. We supported Scott Brown, sort of. You know who he is?

**NS:** Yeah, my dad is a Republican, he is very conservative, I understand.

**PV:** But he wasn't a great candidate, he was just different. It was like oh my god maybe will have someone. And Elizabeth Warne is going to be the biggest disaster she is so flamin' liberal. I can't even listen to that women, I can't.

**NS:** My dad would like love this right now. (laughter)

**PV:** I mean I heard on the radio today, and I don't know what to say to him, and this kid called in to Rush Limbaugh or something like that or maybe it John Lene, and the professor said okay I want you to draw a picture of Jesus. So he drew a picture of Jesus on this big piece of paper. Then he said, "Now put it on the floor now step on it, jump up and down on it." And this kid, this young man, called in and said this is what my teacher wanted me to do and at that point I put it right back down on the table. I mean this, this country is wacky, crazy, crazy.

**NS:** Gets crazier by the minute [laughter] So you have been involved, like you said you have been volunteering. What groups did you volunteer for, and what led you to join or to want to volunteer for them?

**VP:** I had always volunteered when my kids were younger; you know I volunteered to teach CCD. And that's what led me into my work as a director for education. It's also probably because I know my father was involved, he was the head of the PTO and a basketball coach so whatever you see, you're going to do. And I did the same thing, I was the soccer coach for three years for my kids when they were little. I was on school council, and I was on the health task force in town. So even though I had three little kids and my husband was always working, I did hire babysitters, which you know cost lots of money, not like they do know. (laughter). Just so I could get out there, and I know I needed that for me to get out, but also I wanted to do something. So then I did the CCD, which led me to my work. And even when I was you know working full time, my husband and I joined the nursing home ministry in the parish, in Auburn. And that we did that for I want to say ten to 15 years. That was the best ministry we ever did because we would bring communion do a community service in the nursing home, not every Sunday. We would take turns with people in the booth and did the community service then brought communion to people in the rooms who couldn't come to the service, and that was so rewarding. Once you get out there and volunteer, you realize you just want to be with people you want to do something. And elderly people are certainly very grateful usually for what you're doing for them. And I just knew that I wanted to keep involved. Then director of the music school, where I volunteered, she said to me, "Would you like to get more involved in the school?" And I said yes and then you know within six months I was president of the board. So I'm like okay. (laughter) So I think it's just example set for me. And I wanted to be involved in my kids' educations in schools, and then getting out doing something to help people, and for my own sanity, to get out of the house. And I have always liked volunteer work. And I feel fortunate that I don't have to work, I stopped working like seven years ago so I feel fortunate because my husband works so hard that I don't have to work and I can volunteer.

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

**PV:** It has played a big part. You know I was raised Catholic, and we're still Catholic, still practicing Catholics. We actually come to the chapel here now at 10:00 on Sunday

mornings because I was kind of sick of parish life. I had worked in parish life, and I kind of got this illusion about the Church, I never stopped going, but just an illusion. Not just the sex abuse crisis. Yeah that crisis was bad enough but they would still be kind of arrogant, the priests and the bishops, not prosecuting people or not letting the files up after of what was going on. That really was worse to me than the sex abuse crisis, almost that they wouldn't freely admit that that would happen and be up front about it. When Cardinal Law from Boston, that was the worst thing. That he had covered up or not come forth about yes having transferred priest around after they have abused kids. You know they put back the in the parish after they thought they have given them enough therapy. And maybe they just didn't really understand that that is something you really can't cure. But he to me represents such arrogance in the church, because he took off to Rome that's why he's still there because he would have been prostituted here in Boston if he hadn't left at the time he did. And when Pope John Paul II died, and Cardinal Law said one of the masses, one of the televised masses after John Paul II died. And it was sort of in the memory of him, I just thought that's a slap in the face of very American Catholic, for that Cardinal to be still revered. And to me that showed me an arrogance on the part of the Vatican too. What you guys, don't you realize who this man was/is? And is waiting back here in Boston and what happened in Boston? So I think I just felt like not so much a crisis of faith, but a crisis of church in the sense of the hierarchy and all the clerical stuff. And I think that there are priests who are still doing this today who are all about the power and that's what really turns me off about church. I really needed to get away from the parishes because a lot of the priest in the parishes or the hierarchies and priests, they don't have to take that rule, they don't have to think about poverty so there out there doing whatever they want. And that's okay to have cars and whatever, but I just felt that they were all about power, and prestige and I'm going to be the pastor. So that's why we had to come here because I said I can't. You know the priest here, they are monks they are basically prayerful people. They always give a great homily. You know in your own parishes at home, first of all they always have white hair, and here all old and oh I heard this before. And these people, if they don't give a good homily they criticize when they go home, they go to dinner or something. They told us that once, they said that if they don't give a good homily then they go to dinner and say what were you talking about. (laughter). So it still does play a big role in forming children in the faith at an early age. And my children always went to school, partly because that was what we expected of them. Not when I was a DRE, there would be parents and they would say whether their child was in eighth grade or high school they would say, 'Oh well, Jennifer doesn't want to go to church.' Who is the parent here? You know, that's what you do as a family. You don't say oh it's okay you don't have to go. So that was always the expectation. My kids never said, "Oh I don't want to go." It was just a part of our life, and it still is it's still going, I just went to a baptism for one of my grandchildren. So it continues to be a big part of my life, but I struggle with the church hierarchy and the sense of the sense of, what's the right word, the power the priests feel they have. You know we know everything better than you. You really haven't lived in the real world until you lived in a

family. Now they lived in a family as a child, but to run a family and to have kids and everything. It's a big part of my life, but it's still a struggle dealing with the church.

**RM:** Moving on to health, have you had any health issues that have impacted your life or in your family?

**PV:** My kids were all pre-mature, and that did affect us in the sense of the first one was two months early, so and that was she is 34 years old so. At that time, the Neonatal Unit , at the Memorial [Hospital] had been built like a few years before so. He was born in Children's Hospital, and he was stable. He came out there he came out to Worcester to be closer to us. But that impacted us a little bit in the beginning, because we had just moved into our house in Auburn. And, no I really haven't had any other health issues.

**RM:** That's good. What are your experiences in accessing quality affordable health care?

**PV:** I haven't had any problem, because you know we have always been employed or my husband pays a fortune and is a self- employed person, pays 25,000 dollars a year or something like that. We have not had a problem.

**RM:** And whose health are you responsible besides your own?

**PV:** [laughter] I have to feed my husband healthy food, and that's all.

**NS:** Now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women than has been recorded in the past, what should we be sure to include if you think we should include anything else basically?

**PV:** Besides the questions you asked me?

**RM and NS:** Yeah, we do have more questions.

**PV:** Oh okay.

**RM:** But the history of women, what do you think is important? [laughter] I know it is kind of broad.

**PV:** Yeah I just have to think about that. I really don't know

**NS:** That's okay, we can just ask you the other questions if you want?

**PV:** Yup

**NS:** What major historical events in Worcester have occurred during your time here? Did they impact you personally? If so, expand on this memory if you could.(laughter)

**PV:** Well I feel like I was participate in one by being the first class of women here or co-ed class, that really impacted my whole life. And if I hadn't come here, I wouldn't have been married to the same person. What was the question again?

**NS:** Major historical events in Worcester that have occurred during your time here, that have impacted you personally.

**PV:** I am trying to think what personal events there are. And are they Worcester historical events?

**NS:** Yeah

**PV:** Well I don't know, I don't think they are historical, historical for Worcester But like the revitalization of let's say Shrewsbury street. I don't think that's historical but I am trying to think of what else.

**RM:** Maybe the closing of Higgins?

**PV:** [laughter] Well that's sure one less thing on the tour now. One thing like even just the opening of the Hanover, that was about five years ago, they're just celebrating the anniversary. To bring more culture into the city, opportunities to see staged ballets, the actually having a train station where you can get on a train. Things like that.

**NS:** It's okay if you can't think of anything.

**PV:** Okay, if I think of something I'll tell you.

**NS:** How old were you when you were allowed to date? And where did you go?

**PV:** I was in high school. I think I went on a few dates, and it was mostly like if it was a dance. I went to an all girl's Catholic high school so if it was a dance we went out. Like I said, I was really shy, so I didn't go out too much in high school. So it would be to an organized dance by the school or something like that.

**RM:** I just have a question. Would the school, would it just be for the girls at the school?

**PV:** And their dates?

**RM:** Was there an all boy school around there?

**PV:** Yeah there was.

**RM:** So were they invited?

**PV:** Most of the ones I went to would be not just a dance you would go to. It would be to like if it was prom, or the winter thing, or dance. I didn't really go out too much other than that.

**NS:** What was considered fashionable when you were a young women? [laughter]

**PV:** What do you mean, like clothing? [laughter] or what?

**NS:** Yeah, clothing, hair, makeup.

**PV:** Everything you see now in the store, are what we wore, in the sense that a lot of the stuff is coming back.

**NS and RM:** Really?

**RM:** High-waisted pants.

**PV:** Yeah, I mean I've seen the flared pants, the prints and things that are out now, more geometric designs on them or really heavily flowered. We had bell-bottoms, we had hip hugger pants, we had the body suits where it would be a shirt and it would snap underneath. And they would be like hippie stuff. I didn't I wore jeans, yes. But a lot of women wore those, it was long hair, granny glasses, those shirts you see them in the stores now. They have a gathered neckline, and they're real cottony, sort of like you know like a real Indian kind of print.

**RM:** Oh yeah, like Tribal.

**PV:** Yeah or more like Indian like the country Indian. Like blousy things.

**NS:** Oh that's cool.

**PV:** I remember having jeans with like an inch thick ribbon at the bottom of the pants.

**NS:** [laughter] That's so cute!

**PV:** And the dances were totally free dances, in the sense that I think probably in my mother's time it was ballroom dancing. And then it went everybody just went free and wild. You know the twist [laughter] A lot of it was whatever you want to do, you know free thinking you could do whatever you want. People were high on marijuana a lot. That

was a big thing. But personally, I was not in to the hippies at all, especially coming from the military family. It was just not my thing, it was more of strict and structured upbringing where you would address people as yes mam, no mam, yes sir, no sir. But yeah the clothes, my brother had an afro like this big. Cars the VW buses, but you probably don't know what that is.

**RM:** Oh no I love those [laughter] I love those buses.

**PV:** And it would be like their hangout with peace signs would be all over everywhere.

**RM:** I am obsessed with those.

**NS:** Should have been in that time period [laughter].

**PV:** See and I've seen clothing, even little kids clothing that had peace signs on them. [laughter] What is this, that was the 60s? You know bangle earrings, lots of earrings. I noticed you had those bracelets, I never even heard of them until I went to the store the other day and I'm like. Somebody said Ani and what?

**NS:** Alex and Ani.

**PV:** Alex and Ani whatever [laughter].

**NS:** I love them [laughter].

**PV:** I guess [laughter].

**NS:** That's how people look at me [laughter].

**PV:** So like I said, a lot of it is the clothes that are in the stores now. And the colors have come back like the bright oranges.

**NS:** Oh, I love that color.

**PV:** The fluorescent greens, I mean that's what it was when I was.

**NS:** Yeah that's so cool.

**PV:** And the skirts keep getting shorter. When I was here I had a skirt that was probably right up to here I mean it was so short it was ridiculous. If I saw a girl with that now I would say, "Where's your clothes?" They were just so short.

**PV:** So, and then the skirts seem to be getting shorter. When I was here, I had a skirt that was probably, like, right up to here [indicates]. I mean it was so short, it was ridiculous! If I saw a girl like that now, I'd say, "Where's your clothes?" They were just so short.

**NS:** [background noise] Oh it's okay.

**PV:** So, anyways. (??) It's 7:15, 7:20.

**NS:** Okay, we're fine. Okay, cool. What was your favorite musical group or song?  
[laughter]

**PV:** See, I wasn't into that music. I didn't even really like The Beatles or anything like that [laughter]. I swear the only record I bought, it was a Dionne Warwick record.  
[laughter] (??) It was a song named "Alfie."

**NS:** "Alfie?" Interesting [laughter] (??).

**PV:** So, I-I was not really into that kind of music. I did not fit in that era.

**NS:** That's okay, we need those to stand out. [laughter] Okay, so, how were girls treated when you were in school?

**PV:** In college or school? Cause...

**NS:** College? College. College?

**RM:** I would - yeah, maybe both.

**PV:** Cause in high school, it was all girls.

**RM:** Oh right (??).

**PV:** And we had nuns and I remember my sister was - she's five years younger than I am and she went to the same high school after I graduated and everything. And one nun said, "You're nothing like your sister Patti!" Cause my sister was not a conformist, I was more like the meek, quiet one.

**NS:** Yeah. Uh-huh.

**PS:** And she was not. And she was like, "Well, I don't wanna be my sister!" [laughter] So, I don't - you know I can't tell you the difference in that. But here - but when we were in college, for the most part, I remember being accepted and respected and I don't really remember any incidences. The only thing people talk about is - and they, I don't

think they ever did it again, and I think they used to have it when it was just all guys. So the first, you know orientation, they had – I think they had a slave auction [laughter].

**NS:** A slave auction? What?

**PV:** You were supposed to be the slave or something like that. I think that's what it was. But they never did that again, ever.

**NS:** Oh, I would hope not. (??) I'm still like, "What?"

**PV:** So you had to do what they wanted to do. That's kind of what I remember.

**RM:** Was it like –

**PV:** (??) Maureen Doyle... [laughter].

**RM:** Was it like the freshmen were...

**PV:** Yes.

**RM:** ...slaves to the senior? That type of – okay, okay.

**NS:** Oh, man I wish (??)

**PV:** Actually she didn't live on campus.

**RM:** Oh, no?

**PV:** She was a day student.

**NS:** Oh, but still [laughter]. Wow, that's just really interesting. Okay, so what were you most significant extra curricular involvements?

**PV:** I don't think a lot about that, I really did not get involved in that much. Like there were things with campus ministry and whatever. I just was – I studied a lot and I did not volunteer when I was here. So I often wondered that – why didn't I do that. I think it was cause, like I said, I was so overburdened with schoolwork and I worked on switchboard. And then later, I was a junior or senior, the President of the college, Father Wilfrid Dufault, he had a secretary and the secretary became ill with cancer and he needed somebody to fill in for her part-time. So I actually did it because somebody else who knew him well told him that I had worked in Washington, D.C. during my summers in between – you know, during college, my summers – at an executive secretariat for the Peace Corps. And so – I mean that was like ancient history because you know they didn't

have computers, you had to type every letter on a typewriter and you could barely – it was like you almost had to type it perfectly because it was – you couldn't just backspace and put a new [laughter]. So I had that experience and so, they asked if I would help them in the President's office. So I did, while she was being treated – she eventually, she did die that – I'm not sure if it was that year or not, but... So I was working and...oh, then I became when I was junior, I became an RA.

**NS:** Oh, really?

**PV:** And then senior year moved off campus. So I, you know, I was either working or studying or something. That was kind of – I often think back about that, why didn't I volunteer? I think it was probably just the unknown and how was I going to get to these activities and stuff like that.

**NS:** Right.

**PV:** So...

**NS:** Okay, interesting. What did your parent's education consist of?

**PV:** Well my father actually was in the seminary. Then he left seminary to go in the war, to enlist. And then later on when he was, when he was an officer, he got – I think it was like, sort of like online learning but it was – I can't remember what they called it. It was distance learning where he got his, probably an undergraduate degree in...I don't know. So he did that and my mother was a nurse, so she had had two or three years of nursing training; not like a nurse now in the sense of, you know they gotta have their MA and their PhD in nursing or anything like that. So that was their education.

**NS:** Okay, and what difficult transitions did you go through in moving from childhood to adulthood?

**PV:** [laughter] Hmm, maybe none.

**RM:** Was it difficult for you to settle down up here, where you were so far away from your parents?

**PV:** It was in the beginning, but then I got used to it. I actually – the nice thing about coming up here, nobody else from my high school went, came to Assumption, so I was all here by myself. And, like I told you, I was very shy so I didn't talk too much. When I came to Assumption, I was able to be a different person. Not like personality wise in the sense of schizophrenic [laughter], but I was able to not be shy anymore. Nobody had that perception of me. And so, coming here, being a coed and – it was actually a separate college at the time, the Coordinate College for Women, and then the next year I think they incorporated together. But it was actually nice that nobody knew me, they had no

preconceived notions about who I was or that I was quiet, so I didn't have to be that way anymore. And then with all the guys on campus, you know, you had to be outgoing and all that [laughter]. So it was – I don't remember you know, any real difficulty in transitioning into adulthood. It was, basically being away from family though. But I had gotten that transition in college.

**NS:** Yeah, definitely. Okay. Where there particular areas of the city where you spent a lot of time?

**PV:** No.

**NS:** No?

**PV:** Because we really didn't –

**NS:** Yeah, you didn't go out.

**PV:** I remember one or two times going to Main Street, Worcester like to buy a coat or a dress or something like that. But we really didn't spend time down here, down there, in the city.

**RM:** Alright, how do you go about facing challenges that come your way and what kind of thoughts keep you going?

**PV:** Well, I'm a lot more calm about them now. I used to get really upset and – there was a challenge or somebody I didn't – couldn't get along with or whether it was in my job or whatever. Over the years, I got more calm, I don't cry as much about things like that, and one thing that helps is talking things over with my husband. You know, just having somebody to bounce it off and he's pretty good about advising me and since he deals with, you know that's what his business is, dealing with people all the time. So, that's how I deal with them.

**RM:** How do you define success in your life? And has this definition changed over time?

**PV:** Oh, one thing about the challenges is – read the question again cause I wanted to finish that, I had something else to say.

**NS:** The challenges one?

**RM:** In moving from childhood to adulthood?

**NS:** No, how do you go about facing challenges that come your way? That one?

**PV:** And?

**NS:** And what kind of thoughts keep you going?

**PV:** What kinds of thought keep me going are how grateful I am for my life and every – the people I have in it, that I’ve been fortunate to - my parents paid for my college education, I didn’t have any bills, that I married the right person, or a good person, that I have three wonderful children, spouses, grandchildren. So a lot of things keep me going are thankfulness, gratitude to God, and another thing is – one thought is there’s a woman that works with my husband and she’s about 44 or something, but since she was a baby, she lost one eye. And then when she was about, probably about 34, and she had just gotten married, the cancer came back and she had cancer that took one eye when she was a baby and then when she was 34 she was diagnosed with bone cancer. It was like right behind the eye there. And so for ten years she has gone through so much – so many treatments, so many medications, so many surgeries, and she’s still is working and if you saw her you’d, you might be a little taken aback because she is quite disfigured because you know, she’s got one eye gone and now the other eye is gone because she’s had to have surgeries to remove it and it’s almost like you see like an eye patch sewn into where her eye was. And so, ever since she’s had that it’s like I always say if I complain just kick me because I have nothing to complain about. So any challenge that comes I’m like, “What would Amy do?” or you have nothing – you know, this is a little thing, you know, whatever. So that’s one thought that I always have in the back of my mind.

**RM:** So then the other question was, how do you define success in your life and has this definition changed over time?

**PV:** Success is, to me, I guess – I don’t know if it’s changed or not. Well, maybe in the beginning, you know, you think you’re supposed to be wildly happy with everything and even marriage and all that comes out – it’s not, it’s not 100 percent happy about anything. Because there’s challenges in every line of work, in every family, in every person’s life and so perhaps, not always thinking you have to be 100 percent happy all the time. I think success is, you know people would say, “Oh, I want my child to be happy.” Well, that’s a good thing, but I want them to be good people too; good, moral people. Responsible and – but the things we’ve tried to instill in them. To do the best you can, I always said to my kids, “If you can get an A, get an A. But if you can only get a C, if that’s what you level is, that’s okay. You just have to try your hardest.” So to try your hardest and be responsible, to live up to, you know, what you have – what you are espousing. If you’re a Catholic Christian you have certain expectations and, just being successful in that way, living up to your – to the morals that you’ve set for yourself and being honest and – so you don’t have to be exceptionally rich, although we’re fairly well off and I’m so grateful for that too. I don’t think that’s where success really is; I think it’s success in being a good person, providing for yourself, being responsible, you know so that you’re not

dependent on your parents forever, and that you can help other people, you know when you're at a point when you can, that you always reach out to other people.

**NS:** Yeah. (??)

**RM:** Okay, how do you feel about the choices you've made in your life? Do you have any regrets?

**PV:** No, I think that I don't have regrets about [clears throat] you know, that I majored in French or anything like that or that I married my husband or that I had children. I think that if I had – I went back to, when got my Master's here in Religious Education that was where I was at at the time. And I've often thought about, well I could go back to school now but, (??) I'm not really that excited about going back to school and doing another career because as I said, our kids live in Virginia and I just want to be close to them as many times as we can get down there. But I would've – I wished it that the Religious Education field, or the degree that I got the Master's wasn't as narrow as it was. I don't think you necessarily need a degree in Religious Education to do the work I did. So, after being on the board at the music school for so many years, I thought, "I should have been in development." [laughter] You know, I should've been in – done something else, but I can do that on a volunteer basis too, and that's what I've been doing. Are they waiting for you?

**RM:** I don't know.

**NS:** I don't think so, no.

**PV:** Oh, okay.

**RM:** We still have half an hour. (??) Based on your life experience, what advice would you give to women of today's generation?

**PV:** Based on my experience?

**RM:** Yes.

**PV:** Okay, I would – I would tell young women to don't be foolish. Don't give yourself to any man that comes along because you will regret it. And I really feel that young women have almost – they give themselves away to whatever guy comes along, and then the guy can leave them anytime, they don't get a commitment out of the guy. I think this is one of the biggest things that women have – women are dumb that way. In the sense of they – they don't value themselves for what they have, their intellect, their – their goals or anything, and they – a lot of young women ruin their lives by just being focused on you know, "Oh, I've got to have somebody to love me," and all this. Well you know

what? You need to take care of yourself and learn about yourself. I just think that is one of the biggest tragedies in this – in this culture is people sleeping together before they get married, living together before they get married, it has created so much – and it has created so much, so many problems for young people for children who are the products of those relationships. I mean the kids these days are just, to me they are – they mess up! A lot of the younger kids, they have so much baggage. You have a family gathering, okay, well you might have four to six grandparents or step-grandparents. You might have four or five stepbrothers or sisters. I just think that-that this has not been good for women in particular because how many women now are – this sounds terrible – stuck, I'm a firm believer in life, promoting life. But they have a child, they're trying to – how can they better themselves when they have a child? Let's say they're-like say they're 18 or something and they get pregnant, they have a child. What chance now do you have to-to do what you want to do and to find a mature relationship, like some guy who cares about you and everything? You've got a child, now how are you going to pay for this child? How are you gonna go to school? I think that's one of the biggest – I always tell – and that was the expectation for our kids. And none of them lived together before they got married; they probably thought I would be a little upset, I would. Because it's what-it's what, to me, it's what your parents expect of you, it's what expectations they give you as hopefully that you'll fulfill. So that is a big thing: to value yourself more than being needy and having to have a guy all the time. You will find a guy in the future; you will find a guy but don't ruin your futures by getting so involved and making bad choices, that's the thing, bad choices. So that's-that's the biggest thing I would say to young women. And also to, if-if you, you know, you're going to get your Bachelor's Degree, I would go on and get my Master's right away because once you do get married and have kids, it's hard to go back. It's very hard to do a degree when you have children and you know, probably always to – even if you don't work full time and you have a family – to somehow, whether it's volunteering or – to keep, you know to have something to occupy yourself with for yourself too. Whether it's to work part-time, to volunteer, or whatever. Because you stay in the house with your kids all the time, you're gonna be crying all the time [laughter]. So that's-that's-that's my advice for young women.

**RM:** Okay, who were your role models or heroes when you were a girl?

**PV:** Oh, well definitely my parents were role models. Heroes? Hmm. I think, you know the first astronaut, the guy – John Glenn – who orbited the world – the, yeah, the earth. Probably at the time, you know, John Kennedy, I remember being in Virginia when they – on the playground – when they told us that he had died. So, I guess I don't remem-don't think – I can't think of any heroes in particular. The role models were also what we were watching on TV. You never had – our parents never had to say don't watch that, unless you were watching too much of it. Because the shows were wholesome, they were family oriented. There was no sleeping together, living together, or swearing. It was just good, wholesome... So in the sense that the role models of my parents were extended into the television and what (??). So, I don't really have any heroes that I can think of. I mean I

did read books like – I think Saint Thérèse Lisieux, I always thought of her as like the perfect person to-to be you know-to have the role model that she was. And some of the people, like in history, you know somebody like Clara Barton, who started the Red Cross or people who really made a difference in people's lives and (??).

**RM:** Okay, and I think this is the final question.

**NS:** Yeah, final question.

**RM:** Okay, what are your opinions on this generation's need or dependence on technology? ...as we're recording on (??) [laughter].

**PV:** Well I think the technology is great when it's used well. When it's not – it can be quite obtrusive and rude, I think they need to have like some courses on manners about like – my nephew at WPI [Worcester Polytechnic Institute] texting, constantly to his girlfriend. Constantly! And you'd be like, you know you just want to say, "Kevin, put that away for now. Just put it away." The social media, I'm not into that at all. All my kids keep saying, "You need to go on Facebook!" [laughter] And then I heard somebody else say the other day, "Oh nobody's on Facebook anymore." I'm like what?

**NS:** No, I don't use Facebook anymore.

**RM:** I don't (??).

**PV:** So what do you use?

**NS:** I use –

**RM:** I don't really use social media.

**NS:** I don't really either. I mean like, only like, if like, cause like there are a lot of groups, like organizations, like staying in contact with only for that and like, campus ministry, they have Facebook groups and like Twitter and stuff. But honestly, I don't know. I find it very annoying [laughter], a waste of my time. Like I have so much better things – I'd rather talk to people in person, personally.

**RM:** Yeah.

**PV:** So, to be in touch with people you just text and (??)

**NS:** Call, talk in person.

**RM:** Yeah, or Skype.

**NS:** Or Skype.

**PV:** Skype? Oh, okay. I can do that. (??)

**NS:** Skyping my parents was good.

**PV:** Yeah.

**NS:** Because I can see them, but...

**PV:** Yeah, yeah. (??)

**NS:** Well that's generally – I don't feel like a lot of people would probably disagree with us.

**RM:** No. But I do like YouTube. I like YouTube for – but for entertainment reasons, not for social media...

**NS:** Yeah, right, right.

**PV:** Sometimes the people who are using it a lot are people like my age.

**NS:** Yeah!

**PV:** Like my sister-in-law (??) constantly.

**NS:** My-my...

**PV:** Her kids – what do you call it? – defriended her cause they were – she was bugging them [laughter]. (??) So I think it can get all-all – what's the word I want to say – it can just be like constant. Now if I – I-I have my computer open all the time in my kitchen and so as soon as I hear the thing I gotta run over there. I can't imagine if I had Facebook. I mean, I think it just takes up too much time.

**RM:** Yeah.

**PV:** I think it's wonderful for – just technology is just, it's great and you can research anything you want, I mean. One day I said to my son, I said, "Well-how come people my age can't-can't find anything on the computer?" So that's what he typed into the computer, into Google [laughter]. All this research came up. So, I think it's a wonderful tool, I think it's just great. And I guess they're using them in the schools now, the elementary and whatever schools. I'm not sure if it (??) will become, you know, too

distracting, where you know, you still want them to learn the basics and read. So hopefully – I think it's a wonderful thing when used properly and that it doesn't replace things like reading and communicating like (??) with people. I think it could be isolating for some people.

**NS:** Definitely [mumbling].

**RM:** So I don't have any more questions, do you?

**NS:** No, I'm good.

**PV:** Okay.

**NS:** Do you wanna ask anything?

**RM:** Yeah, do you have anything else you wanna add?

**NS:** If you don't, that's okay.

**PV:** I don't think so.

**NS:** No? Okay.

**RM:** Okay, that's fine. So, thank you for coming here today.

**NS:** Yeah.

**PV:** You're welcome.

**NS:** That was – that was really fun.

**RM:** I'm gonna stop this.

END OF INTERVIEW