

Interviewee: William Eidle
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

July 18, 2002
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William Eidle

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Erin Kelly

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

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Interviewee: Dr. William Reynolds Eidle

Interviewer: Gus Nolan

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Summary: The following interview is with Dr. William Reynolds Eidle, who the former Chair and Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Marist College. In the beginning of the interview, Dr. William Eidle gives a brief summary of his educational background as well as his initial acquaintance with Marist College through Jack Dougherty and Brother Dan Kirk. Dr. William Eidle describes the creation of the Psychology Department and his years as Chair and Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Marist College, as well as the former joint Psych special Ed program between Marist and Vassar Colleges. The interview ends with Dr. William Eidle's stance on what he wish would have happened with the College during his term as well as where he believes the direction of the College lies in the future.

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“BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW”

Gus Nolan (00:01): Good afternoon. Today is Thursday July 18th. We’re interviewing Dr. William Eidle, the former Chair and Dean of School of the Social Sciences, particularly of Psychology. This project is part of the ongoing Archive project. We’re in the Marist College Library, James Cannavino Library. It’s about 2:30 in the afternoon.
Good afternoon Bill.

Dr. William Reynolds Eidle (00:26): Hello Gus. How are you doing?

GN (00:39): Bill, for the records, could you give you give us your full name?

WRE (00:43): William Reynolds Eidle.

GN (00:46): Were you named after any member of the family?

WRE (00:49): Boy, yes I was.

GN (00:50): Would you tell us who? [Laughter]

WRE (54:00): William is after my grandfather, William S. Eidle and the Reynolds was my mother’s maiden name.

GN (01:04): Where and when were you born?

WRE (01:06): I was born here in Poughkeepsie, New York right up in St. Francis Hospital on October 3rd, 1936.

GN (01:13): Do you have any siblings, brothers and sisters?

WRE (01:16): I have a brother, Ed. He’s four years younger than I am. He’s also retired.

GN (01:25): And your parents’ names and what did your father do?

WRE (01:28): My father’s M., standing for Maurice but he never used it, Kevin Eidle. And he retired many years ago as the executive vice-president of what is now The Bank

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of New York here in Poughkeepsie. Started out as the Merchant's National Bank and became Dutchess Bank and is now The Bank of New York. My mother is Marie Reynolds Eidle and she had been an early-age employee in the Dutchess County government offices and that's that.

GN (02:14): Well, what about your early education? Where'd you go to grade school?

WRE (02:17): I went to elementary school at Nativity School down on Lower Newman Street which is the site where... It had been Health Shield, I don't know what's in there now. The building still stands.

GN (02:30): Now skipping ahead to later in life. When did you marry Nan?

WRE (02:33): In 1961.

GN (02:37): And you'll tell us about the children and where they are now?

WRE (02:41): We had three children. They didn't all start at Marist but they all ended up graduating from Marist. The oldest is thirty-nine, is a senior vice-president with Free Bank Corporate in Boston. He's married and has three children. And Paul... also in the realm of Marist, got his Degree and Master's Degree in Teaching and teaches carpentry for the Suffolk County Boces down on Long Island. He's married and has two children. And our daughter, Kierstin, who not only went through Marist but was in the combination undergraduate/Master's Program in Psychology and then went on and got her Doctorate in School Psychology, it's near Albany. And is a school psychologist in the Guilderland School District just outside of Albany. She's married, no children yet.

GN (03:48): Okay and about... Back to your own education, where did you do your college and your graduate education?

WRE (03:55): Well, let's go from Nativity School to Poughkeepsie High School.

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GN (03:58): Well you had high school education too? [Laughter]

WRE (04:00): Yea, yea. I went to Poughkeepsie High School and from there to Fordham College. And at the time I was... I went off to medical school and once I got to medical school, I decided I didn't want to be there and went back to Fordham. Why did I go back to Fordham? Because I decided I wanted to do graduate work in psychology and I had never had an undergraduate psychology course and there were few places that would take a person in graduate programs who have never had anything undergrad. But my record at Fordham was very good and they very graciously accepted me so I could get my Master's and Doctorate there at Fordham.

GN (04:41): Give us a year. When did you get your Doctorate?

WRE (04:44): I completed the Doctorate, actually I completed everything in fall of '65 but the Degree is January '66.

GN (04:55): Okay, and let's come on to teaching at Marist. When did you start teaching at Marist?

WRE (04:58): Fall of '65.

GN (04:59): And how did that happen?

WRE (05:00): Well, it was a very unusual happening because I was living and working in New York City and the last place in the world I wanted to be was Poughkeepsie, New York. And I was at that time going on to graduate school, working for Catholic Charities and I continued to work there full-time. My dad who was mentioned earlier was at Dutchess Bank and, which was also the bank of this place called Marist College, and I had little knowledge of Marist College. I had been out of Poughkeepsie for years and years and years and as far as I was concerned, there was that Brothers place with high

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bushes up on Route 9 and that was the end of that. At any rate, my father was a good friend of, oh God his name's now escaping me, he was the DR here with...

GN (06:09): Jack Dougherty.

WRE (06:10): Jack Dougherty, very good friend of Jack Dougherty's. And so one day Jack Dougherty and Linus Foy were in the bank and my father was chatting with them and I came up evidently in the conversation and next thing you know I get a call at my home in New York saying, "You know up in Marist College, they need a psychologist and Jack Dougherty and Linus Foy..." "But dad, I don't really want... I never even heard of Marist College. I don't want to be in Poughkeepsie." And a week or so later I got a similar call, so alright, alright, the only thing to do here is get the call and I was invited up for an interview, to which I was very late because we came up from New York in the middle of a fierce snowstorm on the Taconic Parkway. At any rate, I met Dr. Dan Kirk who was the Chair of the Psychology Department and we had a lovely conversation. It was hardly an interview by the way we understand interviews today. It was more of a conversation. It was very pleasant and we said goodbye and then we went back to New York and I figured I had done my duty to satisfy my father. And I had some other plans in mind and frankly never thought of Marist College again, expect for perhaps, I don't recall, a couple weeks later, my secretary in New York comes to my office door and says, "There's a Brother Kirk here to see you." And I'm thinking who? "It's Brother Kirk." And with that his face appears in the door and he says, "Well, are you coming up?" [Laughter] And I said "What are you...?" And at any rate my thought was oh my gosh, if they came all, if they bring their body all the way down to New York to invite me, I said oh, this is something I should be considering more seriously than I have up to this point.

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And there I was back up in Poughkeepsie in the summer of 1965, commuting on a regular basis to New York to my job in New York until the fall semester began.

GN (08:44): Now in the fall semester, who is on the staff at that time? Dan Kirk?

WRE (08:48): In psychology?

GN (08:49): In psychology.

WRE (08:50): Dan Kirk was the Chair. Ed O'Keefe, who had been in my graduate classes at Fordham did not at that point have his Doctorate. He was going part-time because he had taken this full-time job at this place called Marist College. And they were the only two psychologists but there was a guy by the name of Dr. David Miller, who was the... He was associated with the Psychology Department by way of being the person who was the psychological counselor on campus. So, he did all psychological counseling. So, for several years, it was Kirk, O'Keefe, Eidle and Miller.

GN (09:38): And how big was the student... Was there a major in Psychology at that time?

WRE (09:45): Yes. There was a major, it was very small. And indeed, up to that point, courses in the main were taught by Dan Kirk and Ed O'Keefe. Ed O'Keefe's training was in Clinical Psychology, mine was more in Experimental Research Psychology. So, Ed O'Keefe was delighted to see me arrive. That meant he didn't have to teach the Experimental courses anymore, [Laughter] which he despised. So, it was all a very happy occasion.

GN (10:23): Okay, let's move along and talk about now some of your first assignments, your teaching more in your field and what other things were you asked to do? Did you

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do any committee work? Were you involved in other activities of the college in those years?

WRE (10:38): Well initially, I remember I had eight preps a year. [Laughter]

GN (10:46): Eight preps a year?

WRE (10:48): Eight preps a year which meant four different courses each semester.

GN (10:52): Right.

WRE (10:53): And they included of course, the Experimental Psychology courses and the Physiological Psychology courses, which in those years we didn't call Physiological Psychology, it was Mind Body I and Mind Body II.

GN (11:08): Was there a requirement that students had to Psychology for some reason to keep you so busy?

WRE (11:16): I believe students probably... I don't know if, I really don't remember whether Intro to Psych was required. It might have been. If anything was required, it would have been Intro to Psych.

GN (11:27): Right.

WRE (11:28): The other courses were of course primarily for majors although they served also as electives for students in other majors.

GN (11:38): What was the first committee you were on that you recall with joy?

[Laughter]

WRE (11:43) : Oh, my lord. Oh, I think I was on the, yes, I remember now, I was on the Finance Committee with Cornelius Russell...

GN (11:53): This is a college financial committee?

WRE(11:54): College Finance Committee with Cornelius Russell and Linus Foy and...

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GN (12:02): Was your father asked to be on it?

WRE (12:04): No. [Laughter]

GN (12:05): They didn't want a banker?

WRE (12:06): I can't remember who else was on it. I remember we used to meet up in Linus' office in the top of Greystone. Unless you had asked me, I totally would have forgotten that.

GN (12:23): Well moving along...

WRE (12:25): I would say that Cornelius... My contributions were minimal because it was so like board meetings that I go to today where the CEO and the CFO seem to have it all together and they just tell you what's what.

GN (12:42): Right. I'm not sure that's true about the Marist board meetings but may be true too. [Laughter] Moving on, you not only taught in the department. In time, you would take a role, an administrative one, and become a Chair of the Department. How long were you here before you became the Chair?

WRE (13:04): Oh, about... Well, I can tell you when I became Chair. I became Chair in 1976.

GN (13:09): Okay.

WRE (13:10): And Dan Kirk had asked me if I would do that and I was happy for...

GN (13:20): But by that time, some great strides had been made. The Master's Program was already in place, wasn't it?

WRE (13:24): Exactly, Dan had developed the concept and did all of the groundwork for the introduction of the Master's Program in Psychology, more specifically in

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Community Psychology. And both the Master's in Community Psychology and Master's in Business opened at the same time in 1972.

GN (13:57): Okay, and then during these years there's a gradual transformation in the development of the college. They're going from a sixty-sixty to a core, which requires more and more students to balance out their program, so the need for more teachers becomes dominant in Psychology as well?

WRE (14:14): Exactly. There was a gradual increase in the faculty in Psychology. Back in the late sixties, early seventies, I can't be exactly sure of the dates, we added a couple faculty spots and they included Dr. John Scileppi and Dr. Midge Schratz. And they were in the department for a period of time and then we expanded further, you know, in the city. Dr. Royce White came on board.

GN (14:56): Dr. Linda... The name escapes me. Oh Linda.

WRE (15:02): Linda Dunlap?

GN (15:03): Dunlap.

WRE (15:05): Oh, she came, well she came a fair amount later. She would've been after I was Chair so it would've been after '76. Oh yes, I think Linda Dunlap came just about the time that Dennis Murray became President. I believe he became President around...

GN (15:28): '78

WRE (15:31): '81. And so Linda Dunlap came about that period of time.

GN (15:37): Okay.

WRE (15:38): And Joe Canale came in that same time frame.

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GN (15:41): Okay, in your relieving Dan Kirk as the Chair, what were the new elements and objectives that you saw coming into the department? Was there to be more of a focus in one direction or another? Were you staying with the Community Psychology as an application for most students to be involved in...?

WRE (16:08): No, well what happened at that point and actually the reason for that change was Dan Kirk went on a sabbatical and it was on that sabbatical that he built his house up here on the Marist campus

GN (16:19): Yes.

WRE (16:22) : [Laughter] And in those early days, you know, the program, the Master's Program was doing fairly well and there was, let's face it, there was a not a unanimity on campus about the value of having a Master's Program at all. So, we were constantly, had our feet to the fire to have the enrollments of a number of justified existence of the program. And at that point in time, Lou Zuccarello was the dean and he was constantly after me, we had to do something. And so, we came up with this notion of a five-year program in which we could have the combination of a Bachelor's and a Master's Degree within a five-year time span. I developed that program and actually I was happy to do so. I thought it was a really great idea and it took long, a little bit. One of my big problems was selling it to the Admissions office. The Admissions office said, "We don't want this. Nobody wants to hear about a Master's Program when they're applying for a Bachelor's Degree." And after it's Jim Daly, who just simply did not want to hear about the...

GN (17:58): The combination of them both, yea.

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WRE (18:00): The combined program. The MA, we used to call it the MA program.

Fascinating that in time, over a period of a decade, that became the biggest draw on the Marist campus to the point that the Admissions office is saying, “We’re going to have to cap this. We have too many applicants for this program.” [Laughter] So, I just chuckled to myself, “Ah ha!”

GN (18:29): Yes, yes. Things turn around, don’t they?

WRE (18:33): Yes.

GN (18:34): While you were the Chair, you also thought it wise to continue with one of the traditions at Marist, handing you with the Teacher Ed program and you brought that in under the direction and the wings as it were of Psychology. What moved you to do that?

WRE (18:52): Well, actually the Teacher Ed really stayed with... was with Psychology, I believe, while Dan Kirk was still Chair. And I think the initial arrangements had been made when he was still Chair and then I carried it forward. And because there was an interest in... I should back up. There had always been an association between Teacher Ed and Psychology because the Teacher Ed program at Marist had, was running conjointly with Mount Saint Mary and it was a Special Ed program. And that was in place, I believe, even when I first came to Marist College because a number of our students were students who regularly, every week we’d go down to Mount Saint Mary to take their Teacher Ed courses down there. In time, that program became increasingly popular but it was also a time when all colleges were struggling to maintain their enrollments. And Mount Saint Mary got the idea that well, look at all these students we’re bringing down here from Marist. What if we closed down this program, then all

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those students would come here instead of going to Marist. Well, we said “Well, we don’t like that very much so we’re going to sever this relationship with Mount Saint Mary” and we developed a relationship with Vassar College. So, we ended up having a really terrific [program] for about a four-year period, Psych Special Ed program sponsored conjointly by Marist College and Vassar College and indeed, Gus, as you know, it was your wife Liz Nolan, who was Chair of the Teacher Ed program at that point and we had hired a new faculty person by the name of Jan Stivers. And Liz and Jan and I would meet regularly with the faculty administrators at the Vassar program, and the Vassar Teacher Ed programs were all relatively small and put that program together. The folks from Albany came down on several occasions to oversee this venture and eventually approved it and it turned out to be very, very successful. So successful on the Marist side that there were many, many more Marist students in that program than there were Vassar students.

GN (21:54): Once again, our break is right. [Laughter]

WRE (21:57): And so, Vassar wanted to keep the program but they wanted us to cap it at twenty-two majors. And the administration at Marist College, knowing what a vital program it was and how the numbers were going off the charts, said “No, we’re not going to cap something that is so popular.” So, we petitioned the State Ed Department and got permission to carry the program on our own. And again, the rest is history. That program was bringing in more majors every year than any other major in the college.

GN (22:36): Yea and I think it’s significant to note that the college originally started as a normal school for training teachers and I think I know [one global] is known is certainly grateful for your encouraging and taking a stand that Psychology would house the

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program. Since it didn't have this particular academic home, each of the majors becomes the source of where the students would get their requirements to complete their Degree.

Looking back, would you indicate any particular problem of sort that was happening as a result? I think you really touched on it here, but other than that, in the field of Psychology and faculty and developing, were there features that you saw that were somewhat, you know, meddlesome that you had to work out?

WRE (23:43): Oh, we were never without our challenges. [Laughter]

GN (23:50): You're always...

WRE (23:52): Always the pressure to keep the numbers up of course and we did a good job of that. Actually, Dan Kirk, going back, after he stepped down his Chair, he really... He retained his position as director of the Master's Program and he was interested in seeing the Master's Program develop into a Doctoral program in Psychology. Not a Ph.D. program but a Psy.D. program in Psychology. And so we spent a great deal of time and energy doing some of the state work to get that program off the ground. The college faculty, nor the administration for that matter, were enthusiastic about this. It was an uphill battle from the get-go. There was a person in Albany who was the head of the licensing here for Psychology in Albany. Interesting that we had to work initially through her, it was Judy Hall. Before going to State Ed per say, Judy Hall, in and of herself was quite a challenge and she was not encouraging at all. I do remember about, it was the time of a Middle States visit and because this program was on the table, the State Ed came at the same time as the...

GN (25:40): Middle States people.

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WRE (25:41): Middle States people. And Judy Hall sent down a gal by the name of her assistant, Rita Madrasa Peterson and Rita Madrasa Peterson went back to Albany and the report came, “You are not ready to have a Doctoral program” and furthermore the Middle States document encouraged us not to pursue a Doctoral program. I have to admit I was relieved. [Laughter]

GN (26:11): Yea.

WRE (26:13): Dan on the other hand, was very, very disappointed. Part of the problem was our Master’s programs we had gotten off the ground with the understanding that as need arose for new faculty, we would hire new faculty for the regulations for Doctoral programs said you had to have all the faculty and all the resources in place before you open the door. The college was not in position to do that. So, the next best thing was to expand out Master’s Degree offerings and so given that we had a Master’s in Psychology and we weren’t calling it Community Psychology by that point, and we were just calling it a Master’s in Psychology, with an emphasis in Counseling. We had that in place, we had the Teacher Ed program so we decided to combine the two and do our Master’s in Ed Psych and the Master’s in Ed Psych served to fulfill the Master’s requirement for getting one’s permanent certification in Teacher Ed and as a teacher in New York state at that point in time. Brother Jim Kearney came on board at that point. Liz Nolan was still the director of the Teacher Ed but Jim Kearney who had...

GN (27:54): The former Superintendent of schools.

WRE (27:57): Who had stepped down and had recently stepped down as the superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese in New York came... And he was also on the Board at Marist College... Came and I was really grateful for his presence here for

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that period of time. It's a couple years. And he was the initial director of that Master's in Ed Psych and he got the State Ed people to put in writing that that program counted... Counting was a very big thing... Counted for the permanent certification. And many times we had to refer to that letter. But nonetheless...

GN (28:41): It was there.

WRE (28:42): It was there.

GN (28:44): Tell me about another strategy that you developed in order to be able to entice teachers in the area to take student teachers which was a requirement also, was there a way in which you were able to offer them something?

WRE (29:00): Well, there were... Initially it was just the teachers who were eligible to take courses.

GN (29:08): They could take courses here?

WRE (29:10): They could take courses here at Marist. Initially, it was undergraduate courses and of course it became clear that the likes of that many teachers who wanted to take undergraduate courses so then it got expanded to graduate courses but they had to pay a small portion of the tuition. I think they had to pay a quarter of the tuition just to assure that they were serious students.

GN (29:35): Serious students.

WRE (29:38): Then however, given that we had the two Master's programs, one in Psychology with an emphasis in Counseling and Master's in Ed Psych, we went a step further and built upon those two and developed the Master's in the School of Psychology. And that was really *pièce de résistance* in my perspective. That was just an incredible program but it was built... At all, every step of the way, we built on what we had.

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GN (30:11): What I do want to ask you now though is talking about the development of Marist academically in terms of you know, your first coming here and what was in place and then when you retired as the dean in the school where we were? The whole going from the core to division to school. Did you see this as a natural flaw in development or was it...?

WRE (30:34): Absolutely. Everything... I think our strength was always in that we built on our strength. And we were always, as I kind of mentioned earlier, in that situation where we're able to make our new hires as the need, as the number of students increased, as the number of course offerings increased. Unfortunately, I think we had far too many adjunct faculty but that was the way it was in many institutions across the land. But we were very, very dependent upon a core, an outstanding adjunct faculty, they really were. They would teach year after year of the same courses. They used to get excellent student evaluations. But we were, there's little question that even though our full-time faculty had expanded extraordinarily, we also had... Well, by the time I left we had over one hundred adjunct faculty.

GN (31:37): Just in Psychology?

WRE (31:39): In the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

GN (31:41): Yea, yea.

WRE (31:42): With a substantial portion of them being in the Psychology programs.

GN (31:48): Alright, tell me about the physical development at Marist. As you look around now, when you came there was one building if that? Was Donnelly constructed? Were you working out of Donnelly?

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WRE (31:57): My first office was in Donnelly. And then yes, I said that the outset here, I knew little about Marist College and so even seeing the Donnelly structure when I came here, it was the first time I've ever seen it even though I was in here, Poughkeepsie. And at that point, they were completing the building of Champagnat.

GN (32:26): The other two dorms were up? Sheahan was up and Leo was up?

WRE (32:29): Sheahan and Leo were up. I think they were finishing Champagnat. Adrian Building was there. In fact, we used to have faculty meetings in the Adrian Building, I remember that rather well. My own office, psychology was housed in the middle of the corridor in the lower Donnelly... No windows. We moved from there to the end of the corridor in lower Donnelly, still no windows, and I was there for many years until we moved to the new Dyson building on the third floor with windows, big windows and Hudson River views. Jack Kelly never quite got over the fact that I got those Hudson River views.

GN (33:21): He had a view of Route 9 I believe for years.

WRE (33:33): Right and I said, "Jack, that's because you were so hell-bent that you were going to be down there at the door on the first floor. You didn't think to kind of use your other half of that third floor." [Laughter]

GN (33:37): Alright, besides the buildings and the academic aspects of the core development, let's turn a little bit to another important feature, mainly the students at Marist. Would you comment on the student body in a contrasting way or is it again, a natural development? The students that you first experienced and the students that would be at Marist today? Do you see a major difference, well versus female, and then...?

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WRE (34:05): Well, of course initially, the student population when I came in '65, it was totally male and then about 1968, certainly without a lot of committee meetings, [Laughter] the College went co-ed and...

GN (34:28): By night school first though. We allowed women into the night school.

WRE (34:30): This is true, this is true. And became non-sectarian. Then indeed we did have some women and initially, particularly in that Teacher Ed program. There was a real, what I would consider, a real communal spirit at Marist College in those earlier days, much more so than at the time that I retired.

GN (35:08): Well, you in those days, didn't you... People make it a point to have a community room for your majors who are... For Psych people?

WRE (35:16): Yea, that's true. That's interesting and I do remember that. Down there in lower Donnelly we had...

GN (35:24): No windows. [Laughter]

WRE (35:26): No windows but...

GN (35:27): A coffee machine.

WRE (35:28): We did have a room set aside as the faculty, excuse me, the student lounge. Actually, it was the faculty/student lounge and just to use that term was grating on faculty and students from other areas who did not have such a facility. But it was... Again, that was one of the things that Dan Kirk introduced and it was in the name of the graduate program, so it was another perk that their grad program seemed to acquire that people who did not have grad programs didn't have. But nonetheless, it certainly... And not only did it contribute to a sense of camaraderie among faculty and students but it also facilitated that social and economic interrelationship between the undergrad and the grad

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students, which we found to be very, very helpful and it was an excellent environment in which to build those combination of the BA, MA programs.

GN (36:37): Could you expect the same from the students today academically as you required in those days? Would they be able to do the same amount of work or will they do better work now?

WRE (36:49): It's a tough question. Initially I want to say, no, no, no that they were much better then and much more dedicated then. On the other hand, let's face it, the environment has changed significantly with the advent, availability of the computers, the internet with the focus on discussion in classroom and things of that sort as opposed to a more traditional lecture kind of a class. So, there's certainly an evolution or change in the way faculty conducted their classes. Perhaps an attempt to focus student learning much more in the sense that students could become more participant in what they're learning rather than just take the notes instead of that.

GN (37:54): In each semester did you always teach? Was teaching one of the things you wanted to do?

WRE (38:00): I always taught up until... Probably the last five years I was here I didn't teach. My administrative responsibilities were just too great.

GN (38:11): And by that time you were the dean of the school.

WRE (38:14): I was the dean of the school of Social and Behavioral Sciences, yea.

GN (38:16): Okay.

WRE (38:17): But probably maybe the last four years I didn't teach and then prior to that I taught one course and it was... It was not an undergraduate course, it was a graduate course. So, my undergraduate teaching probably ceased about, oh gosh...

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GN (38:42): A long time ago?

WRE (38:44): Ten, fifteen years before I retired.

GN (38:48): You worked under the two presidents I believe, President Foy and President Murray?

WRE (38:52): Yes.

GN (38:53): Okay, could you make some comments about the... Just the interaction with working with each man as the president of the college.

WRE (39:03): Yea, I could and I would also add that I was hired under acting president, Ed Cashin.

GN (39:09): Oh.

WRE (39:10): And I very, very much admired Ed Cashin. I liked him a lot. And I can remember at a faculty meeting when I was first here and there was talk about... It was over in Adrian and there was talk about developing a new nursing program in combination with St. Francis Hospital and this was... Sister Ann Elizabeth was coming down to talk to the faculty about it. But Brother Cashin was in charge of this thing here at Marist at that point because he was the acting president and he kept saying to the faculty, "We will do what you want. This is your college." Those words astounded me. I was really taken in by them. Perhaps taken in more than I should have been [Laughter] but it was a language that I thought typified the Marist College that I had joined, become a new faculty member in, and the sense was "We are giving you the responsibility to create this place." Having said that, I don't know that subsequent administrations always felt exactly that way.

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GN (40:41): Well even in that point of the nurses, I think the administration would like to have seen a positive vote to accept them but the faculty...

WRE (40:50): Said no.

GN (40:51): And it was no.

WRE (40:52): It went down.

GN (40:53): Yea.

WRE (40:54): At any rate then of course, Linus came back from his sabbatical and I very, very much enjoyed working with Linus. I remember being Chair at the time the college was experiencing some serious financial difficulties and not only the Marist College but colleges again, across the nation were. And there was a question as to whether or not we were going to have to declare financial exigency and that's something we didn't want to do. But we were in a meeting and we were just about to make the decision that yes and Linus was sitting next to me, "We're going to have to do this, declare financial exigency." When the word came in of the, oh I can't remember the big grant...

GN (41:54): Title III?

WRE (41:55): Title III. The big Title III grant came in and that saved the day. When the word came we were getting Title III, it became clear we were not going to have to declare financial exigency.

GN (42:09): So, it was a close call, was it not?

WRE (42:11): It was a very close call and there were some very interesting programs that developed out of that Title III.

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GN (42:18) Right. Speak about your experience with Dennis Murray as a leader of the college and a...

WRE (42:26): He was a very different leader than Linus Foy. I think Linus had a little more casual approach to Dennis, not that he was any less serious or any of that sort of thing. There's a certain kind of difference. I think Dennis...

GN (42:52): He's more formal?

WRE (42:54): Well, yea. Dennis was much more formal...

GN (42:56): Public relation conscious?

WRE (42:58): Much more focused on public relations and perhaps although the college grew exceptionally well under the more casual leadership of Linus Foy, perhaps at the time that Dennis Murray became president, it was also the right time that the college if it was to move onward needed the kind of leadership, more formal type of leadership that Dennis has provided. And certainly, all we had to do was look around in terms of the buildings that were going up around us, that whatever Dennis was doing was a very, very good thing.

GN (43:44): Okay, rather than focusing more on the presidents, you've also dealt with vice-presidents and I'll mention some of them, Dr. LaPietra, Zuccarello, Molloy, van der Hayden, Artin. Which of these steps out as a more... Well, your experiences with them and as a dean of the department and as the director really of to whom you reported. Were they encouraging, challenging?

WRE (44:16): Every one of them was a major thorn in one's side. [Laughter]
Richard...

GN (44:23): We can of course, can edit this tape you know. [Laughter]

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WRE (44:27): Richard was... Of course I knew Richard from the very beginning but I didn't work that closely with him as dean, just perhaps a year or two. When Lou Zuccarello came on, I worked very, very closely with Lou. And Lou was always, "Gotta watch those numbers." He was a numbers man and he was going to see if that Master's Program go out of business and I was held then for election that that Master's Program was not going to go out of business. And of course, the five-year program merged out of those difficulties I used to have with Lou.

GN (45:13): Andrew Molloy?

WRE (45:15): Andrew Molloy was excellent. He was very, very supportive. I thought he was exceptionally supportive of our programs. Perhaps of all the deans that I worked with, I might have valued Andrew exceptionally.

GN (45:37): Did van der Hayden give you a hard time? [Laughter]

WRE (45:40): van der Hayden gave me a hard time but I always gave him a hard time. [Laughter] We always got along well. He could infuriate me, I'm positive that I could infuriate him but when all is said and done we got it together and indeed Marc van der Hayden was exceptionally encouraging of the Master's in Ed Psych and the Master's at School of Psych and the joint Psych Teacher Ed program. He was very, very supportive of those and for that I am grateful. I used to take it... It got a lot of flack from Marc van der Hayden more for some of the other programs that were in School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. I mean, thus far this interview sounds like it was just Psychology and Teacher Ed but we also had a very excellent program in Criminal Justice and program in Social Work.

GN (46:42): Right.

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WRE (46:44): And those numbers used to lack and there we had to work very, very hard and indeed the social work program not only... It was an excellent program but it was... carried a national certification, CSWE certification and we had to do a lot of things to keep that certification that cost money and there in we'd erupt. [Laughter]

GN (47:17): Tell me now from your perspective, what would you have wished to happen that didn't happen, in your terms here? Are there... Would the Nursing program been the key one or is there more majors or how do you feel about the Doctoral program now? Any of these things come to mind?

WRE (47:41): Well when I retired I was kind of like, people were saying "Well, why are you retiring?" and my sense was you know, "Get out while they're still flapping." [Laughter] We had done very, very well. I mean, we had very excellent enrollments. We had three terrific graduate programs. All of the undergraduate programs were doing very well. The Criminal Justice program had grown and we were at a point in time when there was a great demand for criminal justice. There was a point in time when the Social Work program was growing. So, things were doing very, very well. I have to admit I personally was never convinced we shouldn't move to the Doctoral program and the reason for that was that I knew the kind of resources the college was going to have to expend in order to make that happen. I could also... I also knew that Doctoral programs did not make money, that indeed, many Doctoral students went tuition free. Given what I knew to be the history of Marist College and how Marist College did business and developed...

GN (49:04): It's not an area to go.

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WRE (49:06): That's wasn't part of the deal so I was satisfied that we had done what we had done. I... During that period of time also, I was responsible for having developed an office that till... Well, up until... I'm not exactly sure if it was Dennis at the moment who was in it. But Beth Teed was the officer of Community Research, which is something that we developed as a resource source for Psychology and could have been any of the other majors in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences but it was primarily Psychology, in the community and our initial work was with United Way. That really developed and I would have liked to have seen that develop more. I don't think the college was willing to put the resources at its disposal that that would have been needed. Tony O'Brien and I, Tony was associated with the school development and he was involved in bringing in entrepreneurial programs and I think between Tony and myself and Beth, we could have done some very good stuff but it would have required some...

GN (50:42): Financial commitments.

WRE (50:43): Financial commitments and you know, the college wasn't open to doing that at that point.

GN (50:52): Okay, what do you anticipate for the future? What do you think the college has going for it or against it as we get into this new century now? Do you think Marist is crested or are there are more things to come? Are there directions that remain open for us to take, distance education or should we stay with the knitting that we know, that is the interpersonal kinds of things that we do here?

WRE (51:18): Well, I must admit I'm a person who contrary to most of the other folks I know who have retired from Marist College, have really been retired from Marist College so I don't remember which and I'm not exactly sure what the directions of some of the

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programs are at this point in time. This I do know that Marist College is a place that evolves. Initially it was by necessity and it's become part of its essence at this point to be an evolving place. It is, in a sense, an entrepreneurial place. It has always paid attention to the market. It's a tuition driven place in the name and so it's going to constantly have its feelers out for new kinds of opportunities that will both provide good programming for the students and serve to keep the college alive and well and healthy. As you know Gus, Marist is capitalized incredibly on the technological age and with our arrangements with IBM and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library and god knows all the other associations we had in that regard. I don't know exactly where it's going, as I said, because I'm not here. I don't have my ear to the ground...

GN (53:06): Okay, but do you suspect... I mean, many times when you here, you heard we were capping at 1,500, we're capping at 2,000, we're going to cap at 3,000.

WRE (53:13): Right. Marist never capped.

GN (53:16): Do you think it ever will? I mean, do you think...

WRE (53:18): It's not part of the... It's not part of its nature. It will always try to culminate...

GN (53:26): Evolve?

WRE (53:27): Accommodate in some fashion and in that accommodation, the evolution continues.

GN (53:33): Now you mentioned that you retired. What are you doing in your retirement?

WRE (53:38): Oh, I do lots of things. [Laughter]

GN (53:40): Are you on boards yet? Are you still serving to the community?

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WRE (53:43): Oh, I'm on several boards. I'm on the Board of Cabrini Home of the children's portion and adult home portion. I'm on the developing committee for *Dialogue House*, which is Ira Progoff's intensive journal organization. I am the formation director for the secular Franciscans down at Mount Alvernia. What else do I do...?

GN (54:23): Do you donate to St. Mary's? Do you read for them? [Laughter]

WRE (54:26): Well I... I am interested in being a minister and elector of St. Mary's in Poughkeepsie but I'm Chair of the Site Committee at the condominium development where I live, Springside, which is Matthew Vassar's former summer estate of Matthew Vassar and expensive park-plan type place and so usually before I have my foot out of the bed in the morning, the phone is ringing and somebody complaining about something [Laughter] I have to report. I have to admit I enjoy doing that.

GN (54:58): Okay, on that point, is there anything I didn't ask you that you'd like to mention and how would you kind of put into summation statement what you didn't know about Marist. Was it a good ride? Do you feel it was a...?

WRE (55:12): Yea, it was a very, very good ride and I was particularly fortunate in that I had the opportunity to build a program. If I had a strength, my strength was in building a program. I said that... I think there are some other people who might say that as well and I liked building a program. And so, this array of programs that's existed in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at this point, I can take a lot of credit for having seen and developed. And I had a good mentor, Dan Kirk was an excellent mentor in the sense that he first of all, developed that undergrad psych major, encouraged the bringing in the Teacher Ed and developed that initial Master's program. But I'll tell you,

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I was on the... but he relied on me to redesign that initial Master's program so that the Master's program in sight that's in place as we speak is pretty much, I don't want make it sound like it hasn't changed, there have been many changes but the gut format of it is the one I put in place back around 1976. So, and not only people like Dan but all those vice-presidents we mentioned before, they were clearly supportive in all these moves of the development. They were encouraging they were supportive with everything but money. [Laughter] So long as I could make it work and not cost the college anything, it was a go and I thoroughly enjoyed that. That's what I liked doing, I liked building the program.

GN (57:24): Good, thank you very much Bill.

“END OF INTERVIEW”