

Marjorie Milicker-Schertz

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, New York

Transcribed by Wai Yen Oo

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

Transcript: Marjorie Milicker-Schratz

Interviewee: Dr. Marjorie Milicker-Schratz

Interviewer: Gus Nolan

Interview date: April 24 2008

Location: Marist Archives and Special Collections Reading Room

Topic: Marist College History

Subject Headings:

Marist College Alumni

Marist College Faculty

Marist College History

Marist College (Poughkeepsie, New York)

Marist College Social Aspects

Summary: Marjorie discusses her early years of her life and education. She discusses her time as an undergraduate night student when Marist College began allowing women to study on campus and becoming the first female student who graduated in Psychology at the school. She discusses the development of the Marist College academically, structurally, and administrative-wise and talks about the impact Marist professors, faculty, and administration made on her life. Additionally, she discusses the programs set up the Psychology Department on Marist College and their changes over the years.

[00:07](#) **GN:** Today is April 24th. It's about 11:30 in the morning and we're in the James Cannavino Library at Marist College. We're interviewing Dr. Schratz about her career and her impressions at Marist. Good morning, Midge.

[00:26](#) **MM:** Good morning, Midge.

[00:28](#) **GN:** Midge, could you start the beginning and say something about your life before Marist. Where were you born?

[00:36](#) **MM:** New York City in Manhattan. My mother was visiting her mother...

[00:43](#) **GN:** OK. And where did you grow up?

[00:47](#) **MM:** Mahopac.

[00:48](#) **GN:** In Mahopac, you went to the local schools? Do you recall them?

[00:53](#) **MM:** There was no Catholic school. I went to the Mahopac Elementary and High School.

[01:01](#) **GN:** Alright, the high school was also the local town school as it were.

[01:08](#) **MM:** It was the only school.

[01:09](#) **GN:** It was the only school. We'll be discrete and not ask for your age. When did this happened? But surely the areas of your concern in those years were simply to get an education. Okay. And then when did you begin to go to college?

[01:32](#) **MM:** I began in 1947 and I went to Good Counsel College in White Plains and I went for two years. And then I dropped out and got married and Managed to have five of my six children before I returned to college and I came to Marist and I think it was 1968.

[01:57](#) **GN:** In 1968, you come to Marist?

[01:58](#) **MM:** It might have been '66 in the night school. It was the first year that women were admitted. And there were thirty-five of us. I think most of them were nuns, most of the females were...

[02:10](#) **GN:** And you were finishing your undergraduate degree?

[02:12](#) **MM:** That's right. I had two years credit and I had to time had to prove myself by getting A's in...pretty much ... I went to the night school two nights a week. Then I started full time in I believe it was '68. And I started in the psych program.

[02:38](#) **GN:** When you graduated from Marist, did you continue right on then into a graduate school?

[02:42](#) **MM:** Yes I did I went immediately to... I graduated in 1970 and I'm the first female psych major graduate. I went immediately to the University of Bridgeport in their night school. Actually it started in four in the afternoon. And they went there until I finished my MS.

[03:07](#) **GN:** Alright then, the doctorate?

[03:09](#) **MM:** Immediately into Fordham. I actually was in Fordham before I totally... had the thesis requirement completed at Bridgeport.

[03:21](#) **GN:** And what then was the origins with you coming be an adjunct at Marist?

[03:28](#) **MM:** Well I had always have been in contact with the Marist people. Dan Kirk and Brother Cornelius Russell and Joe Bell and even Linus Foy and we had a breach game that met regularly even during those years I was at Fordham. And there was an opening for a part-time professor. And I started... I believe in probably 1970.

[04:11](#) **GN:** You've put in 1970 as the beginning of your...

[04:14](#) **MM:** of my Marist career as a teacher. As a part time, I did two courses and oversaw the interns, the psych interns.

[04:28](#) **GN:** And at this time you have not quite completed your doctorate, is that right?

[04:33](#) **MM:** No that's right. Would have been actually completed all the course requirement by the fall of '75. So that was five years after I finished Marist. And then I went through the oral defense of the thesis et cetera in the January of '76. And at that point I became full-time.

[05:01](#) **GN:** Okay, I was trying to clarify that now. You're here for five years or so as an adjunct and then about 1976, you're going to take a full position here. Do you recall the circumstances? Was there an interview? Did you have to see a number of people?

[05:17](#) **MM:** Not really because I have been teaching here for all those years and people pretty much knew me. I may have had an interview with Richard LaPietra and I may have had one I don't think that I had any with psych faculty who were pretty supportive of me.

[05:33](#) **GN:** Yeah. How big was the psych faculty at that time?

[05:36](#) **MM:** At that time, I was searching my brain ... And I came up with ... of course, Ed O'Keefe, Bill Eidle, and Dan Kirk. And John Scileppi came when I did, I believe. Royce White came. I think Scileppi came when I was an adjunct and Royce White came as a full-time teacher, the year that I became full-time just before I got my doctorate in '75, fall of '75. So then Chris McClean joined us. She was here for five or six years and she's married and moved to the Carolinas. And then off and on, we had a guy named Tim, I can't remember his name. He had an Irish background. He was from LSU. We had a variety of people who came in and stayed short period of time for ...some were adjuncts, some were full-time.

[06:42](#) **GN:** The psychology department was in the formative stages of becoming a solidified or...?

[06:48](#) **MM:** I think it was pretty well-formed even when I joined. I think they have had good solid program for undergraduates. And they were already starting think in terms of graduate program and I am not sure which year the graduate began but I think it may have been when I was in the University of Bridgeport so it may have been already in existence when I became full-time.

[07:17](#) **GN:** The graduate program took on a rather unique focus though didn't it? Wasn't it going to be a community psych?

[07:24](#) **MM:** Right that was the extension of Dan Kirk's thinking because even the undergrad program had that emphasis early on the relationship of the psych to the real world and to various community agencies in particularly through the internship program. Getting students out in the spring semester of their senior year out working in an actual thing. Having to be on time. Having to meet requirements. And it was a full-time position in the agency. I don't believe that they were paid but yes, they were paid. Dan insisted that they'd be paid.

[08:26](#) **GN:** I see. While this is taking place, it must be that your affection for the college was gone because you had to travel back and forth quite a distance. Didn't you?

[08:26](#) **MM:** Well from Mahopac, it's about an hour. In those days it was an hour now with the traffic, it's probably more. But I was used to travelling. I had travelled from Mahopac from the University of Bridgeport. I have traveled from Mahopac to Fordham in the Bronx. So it was about the same. The toughest time was when I was finishing my coursework at Fordham and I was also teaching a couple course here so it was you know, I remember there was one day when I got out of class at 12:30 at Fordham, I had ... 2:30 here so.

[09:01](#) **GN:** That's pushing it.

[09:02](#) **MM:** That was really pushing it. After that semester was over and I think that was the fall of seventy-five before I got the doctorate, and once that was over, it was a relief. It was no big deal.

[09:17](#) **GN:** Well it was a relief but let's talk about life at Marist and that you had. Let's talk about... teaching is one thing. What were some of the other responsibilities that you had? Let's talk about department first?

[09:36](#) **MM:** Well, it was a very interesting department. We had department meeting constantly and we were always focused on looking ahead looking for ways to improve the program looking for new developments in the community psych but also in the world in general. Originally when I was first studying psychology a lot of it was Freudian and it had changed so we were getting away from. I mean we're still teaching Freud but more from historical perspectives and getting into more of the cognitive behavioral stuff and the more values-oriented kind of ...

[10:23](#) **GN:** Who are the driving voice, Dan or Bill Eidle or...

[10:27](#) **MM:** Dan was the primary one. Bill certainly was supportive. We kind of pulled O'Keefe kicking and dragging as into that.

And then he became the big behaviorist. But originally, he was very psychoanalytically oriented. He eventually turned his back on that and became a behaviorist. But there were different climates competing within psychology not only here but within the greater world.

We went to meetings and we really kept abreast of what was going on.

[11:02](#) **GN:** Okay. Meetings is one thing. Now let's move on. What other responsibilities? You had advisement, did you not?

[11:07](#) **MM:** Oh yes. We always had advisement. We always had committee responsibilities and that was always looking ahead to the possibility of a PSYD program. That was development within that trying to figure out why would we need, how we make our program. We needed either a PHD or a PSYD. More marketable or want more in tuned with our program et cetera. So there was a lot of that kind of discussion. And the great part about Psych was that in our department everybody spoke in mind. There was no ... You never worried about hurting anybody's feelings or whether agreeing with... the power ... whoever was in charge of whatever that we were discussing. So that really attracted me. I thought that was great. To be able to work in an environment where you were unafraid to speak your mind.

[12:08](#) **GN:** Who were the administrators, the people at the time? Was Linus Foy still here? Had Dennis Murray arrived?

[12:15](#) **MM:** No. Linus Foy was here till I believe... '78. So I had been teaching in some capacity for six or seven years.

[12:27](#) **GN:** And who was Dean then?

[12:28](#) **MM:** Richard LaPietra was Dean.

[12:30](#) **GN:** And then followed by Lou Zuccarello?

[12:31](#) **MM:** Right.

[12:33](#) **GN:** OK.

[12:34](#) **MM:** I don't think Lou came in that early. But he might have. I don't know when he came in.

[12:40](#) **GN:** He left one year after Murray arrived so it's like four years. Yeah. Well, he'll be leaving in '79 because he would have been here like '77, '76 to '79.

[12:53](#) **MM:** I thought Linus left in '78. Because my son got a car (?) from him. His old car.

[12:59](#) **GN:** You're probably right. Linus did leave in '78. That's when Dan Murray arrived.

[13:11](#) **MM:** By getting ... a car. That makes such an impression. [...]

[13:14](#) **GN:** One other responsibility would be such things as conference and the...

[13:26](#) **MM:** And committee services. From day one, I was always doing something like... I was a faculty secretary. I was not a very efficient one at that.

[13:35](#) **GN:** This is college responsibilities, different from faculty responsibilities. Let's move over to the college ones. Let's talk about...

[13:43](#) **MM:** Before we leave the department ones, I also ran the pre-school for about six years. That was a part of my faculty responsibility. That started...

[13:56](#) **GN:** What was the purpose of the preschool? Was it to help the community here or was it a source of financial reimbursement to the college?

[14:05](#) **MM:** No, we really didn't make any money spoke more. When it was really to provide daycare for students, adult students, particularly women, who at the point were beginning to think about careers and getting kids to start school. I think it's part of the bigger trend in the world at large when women started to go back to school and also to provide daycare for faculty members. We had several faculty members whose kids were getting into the daycare. And graduate students. We had graduate students who had young children who also came. So it was even maintenance people. We had, you know, a couple of maintenance men whose children...

[15:00](#) **GN:** So it was really a service of the college as much...

[15:04](#) **MM:** And then it became a source of income for graduate students. Because we worked. They worked in the program. They were paid, partially by work-study from the funds that we collected.

[15:22](#) **GN:** That was never a part, though, of the lab testing kind of thing. Children were never participated in

15:29 **MM:** No.

15:30 **GN:** Studies and any anything. It was a service run for the college and the community.

[15:35](#) **MM:** It was a chance for the grad students to interact with the community and experience firsthand. You know the single mother kind of problems that many of them are... I remember children who were biracial... who realized he was Black. His mother was White. That was a bit dramatic. They had some real experience with young children and the developmental stage that they were passing through. And they did a great job. Really did.

[16:22](#) **GN:** Moving from the department responsibilities... college-wise. You served on a number of committees.

16:28 **MM:** Every[...] (laughter) F.A.C. F.E.C

16:32 **GN:** Faculty affairs. From that array, let me just pick maybe one or two. What do you feel were some of the major accomplishments? In your... because those were the beginning committees that have kind of put the college on track. For promotion for instance...tenure-rank and tenure and so on. Were those guidelines set up while you were there or were they changed?

[16:59](#) **MM:** I think they had already been established, for instance. It was a constant fight to kind of maintain a faculty voice. You maintained against sometimes, the not so sympathetic administrative group who were moving more toward business modeling, beginning to run the college more like a business. And we fought very hard to keep the academic standards high, to insist upon faculty voice being heard. That the college not become a business school. So that was a big focus in those days and also, you know, the promotion to have the faculty development committee to make sure standards were met. People were developing while they are here as opposed to developing their doctorate or whatever. And I'm trying to remember what else we worked on...We were ...Ted Prenting and I fought a good fight for the faculty. That's all we did.

[18:16](#) **GN:** We have a rank and tenure itself?

18:18 **MM:** Yes, yes.

18:20 **GN:** And so you had to deal with some tough cases of people probably publishing or perishing or getting their doctorate.

[18:28](#) **MM:** Right, there wasn't the same emphasis on research. Although there was some emphasis on research or publications in those early years. But Marist, I believe, was established as a teaching, you know... big emphasis on teaching, good teaching. So we worked to preserve that. That was very important. And that's one of the things I feared that maybe we lost that... There's too much emphasis on publication and research. Research is meaningless for the most part. Just to kind of make ...the person look good. In those days, it was teaching. And it was not so much student evaluations which can be a popularity contest. We will not ... But more observations, classroom observations. I think every few years from the time that I started, I observed for the psych department. I observed new teachers before they came anywhere near the faculty development committee. We were observed as we moved on. Before we came up for tenure.

[19:44](#) **GN:** Well, you're one of the first departments that insisted on candidates having the doctorates to join.

[19:51](#) **MM:** That's right.

[19:53](#) **GN:** Kind of weathered that problem of having a doctorate was not an issue when they were up for tenure as they already had it a place.

[20:02](#) **MM:** I remembered dealing with one particular faculty member had been here at least since the full six or seven years or whatever. And had made no progress towards the doctorate. Who seems to not have any concrete plaintiffs to preceding that action. While he was a very, very nice person, he wasn't going anywhere. Right.

[20:28](#) **GN:** And what about sidelines then? If they had their doctorates, did you want them to attend conferences to publish

where...there are...

[20:39](#) **MM:** That was considered. Most important is teaching.

[20:43](#) **GN:** How were they doing in the classroom?

[20:44](#) **MM:** Yes. OK. Were they using their whole notes? It's very hard to do that but were they improving on their teaching skills and on their courseworks? Was it going anywhere, was it keeping up with what was going on in the world?

[21:06](#) **GN:** OK. One other issue coming back to the department was the whole point of internships that ... was that what we called them? The psych department would have internships.

[21:18](#) **MM:** They weren't called internships. We called them work-study programs.

[21:21](#) **GN:** Work-study programs, okay. So they went to a site for a period of time. Was faculty in the full agreement with that? There were some teachers and the rest of the college who thought this was a waste of time that they only learned by being in the classroom listening to the professor.

[21:38](#) **MM:** Some of that was jealousy. There was a lot of residual resentment at psychology. That psychology somehow was getting treated more kindly than other departments. There was always competition for faculty resources, the money, the classrooms. The library allocation everything. I think some of that was just that kind of thing. I wouldn't know that... I don't know that anybody really... really so I have the I don't know when they... When they first set it up in here that Dan instituted work-study, I was not here. That was before... I myself did a work-study. I did mine at Lincoln [...] Their campus. It was a community mental health center that I worked at.

[22:44](#) **GN:** Alright. Moving onto other aspects of it. The students who participated in those programs. Do they stay pretty much in psych or did they, you know, when they would leave from Marist, were they committed to psychology in the work world? Did you know?

[23:13](#) **MM:** I think from the undergraduate program, the bachelor's program, a great many of them went in somewhat different directions. Where they may be worked for personnel. They'd work for the police department. They worked for a variety. They went into a variety of directions. The graduates from the graduate programs, many of whom are already working at least part-time in mental health facilities. They'd I believe, almost exclusively stayed with Psych whether they ...some are teaching. Some are professors in the universities all over the country really. But many of them stayed within the mental health, even at the local level or the state level. We have one guy who I think went to Washington.

[24:12](#) **GN:** Do you have particular remembrance of students who did well and went on for advanced degrees?

[24:20](#) **MM:** Well you remember Stephanie Clancy. She's a, I believe, a full professor now at Southern Illinois University. It's hard...a couple are here, teaching here. That got their masters and then went on for their doctoral programs or are teaching in other colleges. I mean, I don't keep up with the graduate students.

[24:51](#) **GN:** Right. When you mention that, that comes to mind. John Scileppi would be one. Who was a Marist student and then came back.

[24:59](#) **MM:** He was an undergraduate Marist student. That's right. Fred Apers who headed up the Cardinal Hayes Home at Millbrook. He's still I believe, the director of that. Annie **Baranato**, who had a career at Hudson River State Hospital. There are many, many more.

[25:27](#) **GN:** Okay. I shouldn't be pressing you on this because this is the detail we can get from the Alumni Office.

[25:33](#) **MM:** Right, John. At the time I was originally directing the grad program, I kept records of all that. Who was where et cetera. Then John Scileppi took over from me. He did not continue to do that because alums are the source of income as well as pride.

[25:51](#) **GN:** Well we are aware of that, I think as our recent magazine made a point of. Let's change the focus a little bit. You come to Marist in a rather unique position. You were an undergraduate student, part-time teacher on the faculty. Then, you became a full-time

teacher. You are the mother of children who came here. So if you have the advantage of seeing a wide spectrum of development, what do you think...have the students changed much? Would you say?

[26:27](#) **MM:** Well I think retiring almost a year, I can't really focus on what's going on right now. In the final years that I was here, I felt that students were maybe a little less serious than they had been earlier. The earlier students were real workers. It was a maturation thing and I think it's widespread. I think it's continued that kids are a little less mature now than they were... even when I retired. That they don't seem to feel, at least some. You can't throw all of them in the same basket. They seemed to be less focused on career goals than earlier students.

[27:21](#) **GN:** Your students for the most part, was, in many cases, first-generation college students from their families. And there was a was an opportunity to learn and then for getting in better positions in life. And the students coming now, most universally speaking, are the children of college parents.

[27:44](#) **MM:** And they expect a car when they are sixteen. School doesn't have the same seriousness, I think. [...]

[28:57](#) **GN:** Changing the focus to the faculty. Was there a diversity in faculty in your years here? Was it pretty much? You're one of the first woman to teach faculty.

[28:13](#) **MM:** I was second to full-time. I think...there was one before me but I can't remember her name. Many of the teachers... I was very impressed when I came here as a student by the Brothers and their dedication to...devoting their lives really to teaching. I didn't even know really what a Brother was when I came here. I'd never gone into... We didn't have any Brothers at Good Counsel and that was only the Catholic school that I had any exposure to. So there... I was very impressed with the teaching and their...awareness of what was going on in the world. Their kind of...Not a dogmatic approach to education. But more... people like Dan, like Linus, who would be ... would have [...] who would ask the ... make statements like "police are the last people to talk about drugs." Remember that? [...] I like that. I like the notion that they were sharp and they were with ... I believe that as...new hires came in. I think there was an emphasis on that in the hiring process, that people be very fuller-looking in terms of their approach to education.

[29:53](#) **GN:** And we could afford to be more particular. Could we not? In other words...

[29:56](#) **MM:** Yes. I'm a little concerned about some of the changes in the standards in terms of ... I don't know much about distance learning. But it makes me nervous if I don't know who is taking the exam I'm giving. It makes me nervous that there isn't that face-to-face interactions with students and faculty et cetera. So those are changes that I don't have any control over. Sometimes we hire faculty who really went in that direction.

[30:39](#) **GN:** I understand that sometimes now faculty come here not necessarily with a lifelong commitment to stay here that this is a stepping stone to another appointment if it's possible to say to a more prestigious college that they're looking forward to some kind of a way of making them walk you. Consequently more concerned with personal development papers and presentations than unnecessarily with placement.

[31:09](#) **MM:** You see the college feeds that when they emphasize, you know, publications and your research. I think the culture moved toward more self-involvement and looking out for number one et cetera during the formative years of many of these somewhat younger faculty members. But also the college rewards that. If you get an article in a magazine or something, they'll make a big fuss over it. It goes back to that notion of what are we doing here. Are we a research institution? If so, how much support is there for research? And it's minimal. You and I both know. But if you are a teaching school, we need to emphasize teaching. We need to evaluate teaching not only through the student evaluation. But we need to [...]

32:12 **GN:** Colleagues to see how you're doing.

32:17 **MM:** If you've gotten meet these criteria for promotion or tenure, that are not connected to really to the mission of the college. Then I gotta look out for me. I mean everybody has that notion that I may not be here. I may not get tenure. I may not get promoted. Look out for myself and not make waves and get good student evaluations. I'll give more A's and I'll get wonderful student

evaluations.

[32:52](#) **GN:** Alright. One other area of concern is the administration. We could talk briefly about two presidents that you served under. And a number of academic vice-presidents. What general impressions do you have of Linus' tenure for instance? Do you recall experiences with him and his involvement with the department and personally?

[33:14](#) **MM:** I wouldn't say that. The personal involvement that I had with him was probably in the lunch. He used to eat in the lunchroom where we all ate. What we called the Rathskeller. And so, he was open to talking. He was very, very nice. He also was an educator. He really placed his emphasis on education and teaching. And so much on research. Because I think we were never going to support it. Financially we don't have really important labs et cetera. So ... I felt he was open to innovative approaches. And that's why Dan got his Psych [...] Linus was open to it. He wasn't worried about the faculty complaining that they didn't have this or they didn't have that. He was more concerned with... "is this valuable?" Because you know. He did encourage that.

[34:25](#) **GN:** But then then came a time when we really did need a new focus financially to remain solvent. And I think Dennis Murray has certainly done that. Has come on board.

[34:37](#) **MM:** Linus made a lot of those connections with IBM that later came into fruition. I don't think he ever got credit for that.

[34:47](#) **GN:** And the other hand, Dennis moved us out into another area. Along with that, we have a number of academic vice presidents, LaPietra was first. And then Lou Zuccarello and then VanderHeyden. And Andy Molloy was there for five years as well. Were they helpful in your experiences here in terms of encouraging you and supporting? Or do you feel that they were more concerned running the college as a business kind of model?

[35:29](#) **MM:** Well, it's hard to discuss it without getting personal. But in the years Zuccarello was Dean, I was coming up for tenure and Royce White was coming up for tenure. We were really talking about how one of us might get it but certainly both of us were not get it by Zuccarello. That we should be looking elsewhere et cetera. And so that kind of a negative, I think. I also think that while Dan managed to get what he wanted even from Zuccarello, I think there was a lot resistance to the developments that we wanted to pursue. I hope he's not going to listen to this because (laughter)

[36:17](#) **GN:** How did you find Andy Molloy?

[36:19](#) **MM:** Andy Molloy stands up for the faculty members. And that was great. I liked that about Andy. I don't know that he was very creative in terms of...I guess. You know what. I can't really say.

[36:39](#) **GN:** Working with a limited budget is hard to be creative.

[36:43](#) **MM:** Yes. Right. And he worried about money. Well I think they both did. I think Zuccarello did too. But we didn't talk about Richard. Richard was great. I mean I didn't have a lot of interaction with him. In an interaction I did have with him, he was very fair. He was very serious. He was, you know, encouraging. I would say.

[37:05](#) **GN:** For the interview, Richard is Dr. Richard LaPietra. He was maybe two years, three years Dean when you were here and then moved on. And finally, VanderHeyden?

[37:19](#) **MM:** Well Vanderheyden is, I thought. I think he's golden-tongued orator. He speaks beautifully. We really were proud to have him as a vice president. Those days he was Dean. He had a very good model. I think he tried... when he first came, he really was trying to do good things academically. I think he was swashed. I think it was my way or the high way from above. I think he went back... he conformed to what was expected from above.

[38:03](#) **GN:** Alright. Moving on to the campus, you've certainly seen some changes on this campus. Have you not? What strikes you as the most dramatic change here? Is it the ball field? Is it the library? Is it the dormitories?

[38:21](#) **MM:** The library really and the technology. The wonderful computer labs, communication labs. And I mean there are some wonderful innovations. And the library of course, ...it's a gem. It really is. And I think in terms of the appearance of the campus. I think in terms of faculty offices et cetera, while they probably need more offices, there is a real improvement. My first office was a rat

closet. It had been the animal... where they kept the mice for the biology program. And it still smelled on rainy days of animals. In my final office, it overlooked the Hudson and it was gorgeous.

[39:14](#) **GN:** So it was that change right there. You see dramatically in your own life.

[39:17](#) **MM:** [...] It's just a different place, really.

[39:22](#) **GN:** All right the lasting question will be the sports. The McCann center was here when you first arrived. Was it not?

[39:33](#) **MM:** No.

[39:33](#) **GN:** It wasn't?

[39:34](#) **MM:** That was built... it was the old gym.

[39:38](#) **GN:** Oh you had the old gym

[39:39](#) **MM:** Then pretty soon after I came McCann Center was built.

[39:44](#) **GN:** Have you had a chance to visit the stadium?

[39:47](#) **MM:** No I haven't but it looks very impressive from Route Nine.

[39:52](#) **GN:** And all of this has kind of changed the character of the college in terms of applications I was talking to some the other day. I would not only not be teach here. I couldn't even be a student here by the requirements now. Getting in. Nine thousand apply and less than one thousand come in. That's one out of ten. I think that that's a fantastic development that is taking place.

[40:19](#) **MM:** I think that when I came, tuition was something like thirty-five dollars a credit and now I think what is it? About forty-two thousand a year.

[40:29](#) **GN:** but the New York Times was a nickel. You know. And now it's a dollar, twenty-five OK so that all has changed. Let's talk about the future. Where do you think Marist is going?

[40:43](#) **MM:** I think they're going to continue to be successful. And I think... I haven't that much contact in these... most recent years. Since I've retired. I think psych changed to some direction. As a psychologist, I may not approve of all the hires and the changing. But it seems to be successful. The graduate program is successful. In the years I ran the grad program. I took over from Royce. We were very strict about entry requirements et cetera. And that was [...] under Scileppi. I don't know if it's ever tightened up again. [...]

[41:39](#) **GN:** What does Marist have going for it that would indicate a positive future? Is it the location of the campus? Its reputation?

[41:49](#) **MM:** Probably all of those things. I think all of those things.

[41:53](#) **GN:** They used to have a strong Marist presence in the high schools where they put a bigger feeder there but I don't think that that's playing such a part now. We get more students from outside New York and from New York. So...

[42:09](#) **MM:** Right. My kids are going to Fairfield and places like that. I mean one of my granddaughters - I only have granddaughters - but one kid is really looking into Fairfield. And I think some of that kids wanting not to be too close to home.

[42:28](#) **GN:** So the building of the dormitories would be a good thing as well?

[42:32](#) **MM:** I think. I think it's very attractive. Wouldn't you love to student living in one of those town houses?

[42:39](#) **GN:** I had a godchild living in one I said. Kerry enjoy it. You'll never be able to afford anything like this, overlooking the Hudson and nice new building all of that.

[42:54](#) **MM:** Location is a big plus and hopefully the academic programs are still strong.

[43:02](#) **GN:** What about the sport at Marist? Do you follow that in any way?

[43:05](#) **MM:** Oh yeah. I think. I was more involved in it when I was teaching obviously. I think they are a plus. I think they attract a lot of students. You know a lot of wannabes who would like to be on the basketball team or the lacrosse team or whatever and I think you have to have that in order to attract the kind of student who can afford to pay.

[43:34](#) **GN:** I understand even now that. One of the reasons for the stadium is to attract guys since this has become a little bit tipped to a more woman. And we want to have more guys and those guys don't get scholarships they'll pay the tuition to wear the Marist

uniform and stay on the sideline. But they are not going to go to Notre Dame but if they get here, there's the thrill of playing. And I think that that was part of the investment that led to this.

[44:06](#) **MM:** I just like to see more money spent on - well because I know they add faculty every year. But I don't think that it's commensurate with the expenses of the student body but I also wondered about office conditions while there a whole lot better than the rat closet, do they have enough offices? Are there enough places? Where...faculty can meet? Where students can interact with faculty? There was a lot of jealousy really about the psych grad student lounge which really the undergrads used too. And that was a great innovation because then the grad students and the undergrad psych students interacted and the undergrads got a little more serious about psychology seeing the graduate students working on their projects or being involved, being tested in one of those subjects. That was great now if each department had that, I think that we were the only ones that had it. That would be wonderful. And I don't know that it may be in the year since I left they have created those kinds of spaces. I don't really know. Does communications...?

[45:26](#) **GN:** I don't. I really can't tell because I've been out of here eight years as well. But I know that as we speak they're making plans for putting up another new building over here. The technology ...I don't know if it's technology. A grant that has been given to us a number of years ago and they're going to take down the two little dormitories that are over there, the Gregory House and the Benoit. And then was another little high-rise building will go up there. Which will have some class room I hope. And some office place.

[46:00](#) **MM:** It enriches the academic experience. If people who are in the same major are brought together on an informal basis not were one stands in front and lectures the group but rather where there is day to day interaction and a source for ... If you have a question you don't really want to ask your professor or you don't believe what your professor's saying. You want to find out, is this really true? I just think that's invaluable. That's wonderful. And I know when I was at Fordham we had that, we had a nice lounge where everybody could interact and get advice from each other et cetera. Something we didn't speak about Gus that I wanted to that we should speak about is that conference every year where they bring in students from high schools in the area. That's very important. That's a place where both undergrad and graduate student can present papers and demonstrate the equipment that's used for the ...

[47:08](#) **GN:** testing and analysis

[47:12](#) **MM:** That has a big ... that's a wonderful PR tools. And I don't know who started that. But I suspect Dan did.

[47:22](#) **GN:** If not John Scileppi continued it for a number of years after that. And it used to take place the day after graduation. Well the week the Monday after graduation. You think it's all over. It's almost starting over again. I remember the buses coming in for that.

[47:37](#) **MM:** It was there when I was teaching in the early days. I think it's... Well you're right. It was either Dan or John or even Bill Eidle who taught experimental psychology at the time. He probably had a big input into that.

[47:21](#) **GN:** We spoke about the role of technology. But that can become both positive and negative. I suppose we talk about distance learning. But on the other hand, the research that it provides I think is certainly a positive thing. We spoke of earlier about the possibility of the doctoral program in psychology. The reasons was that we didn't have a big enough library. Well that would not hold today because you know ...

[48:30](#) **MM:** We didn't have the room either. We really didn't have the class room. It would have been involved.

[48:35](#) **GN:** Another building. Really, I suppose.

[48:37](#) **MM:** Eventually right it would involve start-up money which at that time we were told that was not available and faculty were certainly the rest of the faculty were not supportive of it. The psych faculty did but not the rest of the college because some of the other disciplines wanted to have master's programs and didn't have a masters programs and felt that we were you know ...

[49:04](#) **GN:** Jumping ahead with a doctoral program and communication is lagging behind. We're lucky to get qualified communications degrees. Well that leads us into something about the strengths and weaknesses of Marist. What's Marist's best

strengths, do you think? Compared to other college you've been to like...Fordham, Good Counsel and...

[39:34](#) **MM:** I think that of course all of those place have changed since I have been in that school. I think possibly that a strength would be hopefully the core faculty still have who are really interested in education. Of course, self-promotion is a factor now and definitely is in the moment. But I think there are enough people who are genuinely interested in the students and going beyond the call of duty and you did that all the time. I can tell you the time I spent on advisement. That's just... you know and that was one to one. That was personal I had ninety a semester. And they would change. You have learned one set of names and next thing you know you're in a whole another set of names. So I think that's personal ... which personal interaction which still goes on inside psychology and I think it probably goes on the other disciplines is a very important thing that you don't find everywhere. I mean if you go to Albany, I don't think that you're going to have an adviser that you can meet with and discuss things with.

[51:01](#) **GN:** Well, part of it is I suppose, when you have lecture halls of two hundred fifteen, you know you'll hardly get to know the professor and then they break down and a smaller groups. But the graduate students don't play that much of a role and it's just to get through the course. Now I've not participated in this only maybe once in a graduate program.

[51:26](#) **MM:** So that when it really relates to the fact to the notion of an emphasis on quality education and also there has to be... if you have a huge group of two hundred people, are you using... .no, I mean are you interacting with those students or are you talking at them. Do you have the same ...? Is developing your own knowledge of your discipline in developing ... your ... what you teach? Or do you every year go in with the same set of notes and give them the same old stuff. Nobody knows because nobody's watching, you know. That's the thing that I think you might find in those big classes where you know, you give a test. You can't give an essay question because he's not going to read two hundred three essays for his two hundred sixty people is seven hundred fifty et cetera. So it changes the teaching if you don't have the small class. That to me is the biggest plus of Marist at least was when I was here. Thirty-five was pretty much the biggest class and one year I had forty-three in the graduate program class. Andy Molloy, he was the Dean then and he was horrified, just horrified. And then it changed. They broke it into two sections each year et cetera. So somebody is watching to see that the quality of education is not being watered down by the numbers. And I certainly was never being horrified by a professor who no longer is here, I guess he was an assistant professor who taught experimental psychology and gave them all multiple-choice exams. That is just bad. So whoever is his supervisor is responsible for letting that happen. That to me is disgraceful. And it can't happen without a structure.

[53:48](#) **GN:** Supervision and [...]

[53:49](#) **MM:** Right. When you throw a lot of people into the same division, who are really totally unrelated or don't really have the same core ...kind of, disciplines, you are going to breed that. You are going to lose that kind of hands-on... important...from the top-down...

[54:23](#) **GN:** So I would take it that if I said to you if you had a chance to go to the board of trustees and I have to give them one message from one who had taught here for a while, your interest would be on the educational aspect of the teaching going on and not too much on fund raising to make sure that we had. You know. Well, bigger facility. We have to have fundraising but ...

[54:47](#) **MM:** But I think go back to the real emphasis on good teaching. In order to have good teaching, you have to have good administrators, academic administrators who are involved in the process of developing a teacher. And it takes a while. Let's face it the first time. You teach the first time... you teach a course even if you're an old professor, that first time you teach a course you'd think oh boy I can't do this. I want to do this. You know it's a developmental process. But it has to have some structure to it. It has... some help. As opposed to supervision. Not painted criticism and aimed at development.

[55:41](#) **GN:** OK. Here's a theoretical question if we have a chance, you have a chance to name three nominees. Who are the three nominees for who most influenced you and contributed most to your views, what you're saying now about education while you are here? Principally from psych department I suppose but college-wide as well.

[56:02](#) **MM:** Well certainly, Dan.

[56:04](#) **GN:** Dan would be one.

[56:06](#) **MM:** Bill Eidle.

[56:08](#) **GN:** We didn't speak much about Bill Eidle.

[56:10](#) **MM:** But he was very important. He was always from day one in Psych. Because... he does not leave things alone. He gets ahold of it. Like the proposal for the ID, he really worked that. Not just from a practical course... what's involved in this and how do you we get that?

[56:38](#) **GN:** How would we get the teachers and how would we get the background? How will we want the students to want to do this?

[56:44](#) **MM:** Right, right. What should be there to make it a quality program plus how would we get the state to approve it. We would have gotten state approval if we had the money. We really would have. Any try but we would have [...]

[56:57](#) **GN:** You mention Dan but you didn't say very much about. Was it his vision or? It wouldn't be his papers [...]

[57:03](#) **MM:** Creative, very creative. A good brain. Probably the smartest guy I ever met. I include Linus. I include a lot of people but in terms of the ... he probably didn't get great grades in school. But that creative kind of openness to other ways of looking at things, how do we... he was extremely creative. And a good brain. A very good brain. The biggest thing I miss about him is talking to him about theories, books, very ideas that were out there. He just was very bright.

[57:42](#) **GN:** You know I probably have told you the story. We taught together in Saint Anselm. He ran the scholarship class and the required reading was the New York Times Book section on Sunday. Not to read the books but to read about the book so you would have some idea of architecture, mathematics, biology, and physics. And I think that insight was a cheap way to get...wide...

[57:43](#) **MM:** Where did that come from in his brain? And I mean how do he think of these things? Where did these things come from any? That to me was always impressive. That you would think you'd understood a particular area then you talk to him and you'd get a totally different analysis that really had merit. He just was terrific, that one.

[58:33](#) **GN:** And the third person.

[58:35](#) **MM:** I'm trying to think of a third person

[58:38](#) **GN:** I put yourself there. I think you have made a great impression here. Well. I'm naming buildings after outstanding teachers that's what I'm doing

[58:51](#) **MM:** No I think. Let me try to think about...

[58:58](#) **GN:** Outside of the department is permitted. Then Ted Prenting.

[59:02](#) **MM:** Ted and I were like... We worked hard to confront the administration and preserve academic freedom and academic quality, real quality education. You have to give me a minute think about that third person I can't really come up with anyone offhand. I had Kevin Donohue. I had him for philosophy and he didn't just... He didn't just lecture on it but you really... he exhibited a wonderful ability to relate what these philosophers had to say or question what they had to say. So he would have been an influence but there was a priest that I had... Morality I don't know some course I had here as an undergrad. I almost came up with his name Felice? He died I know that he died very young and when he left here.

[01:00:30](#) **GN:** Dippell.

[01:00:31](#) **MM:** No he had such... He really woke me up you know to kind of examine. What are these prayers? They are not saying. What are these things that I just swallow whole? And what is the meaning of it? It's sort of like, if you're doing something good because you look good or because you think you are getting brownie points for it, how that is...phony itself? He woke me up to a lot of phony assumptions that I think you pick up ...if you go through your twenties.

[01:01:10](#) **GN:** So looking back. Give me a summary statement. Marist experience was a good run?

[01:01:18](#) **MM:** Oh yes, wonderful. It was great. It had a great effect on my life. My children who came through Marist have done well and are people you'd be proud of.

[01:01:33](#) **GN:** And you met people who have become lifelong friends I mean.

[01:01:36](#) **MM:** Yes. Oh yes. But friendships not with I don't really have any friendships with students that 'cause of the age difference was so great when I was an undergrad here. And I have to say I don't really have those freindships with people from Fordham either and I think you're too busy. You know I did have six children to rear friendships. With colleagues are my most important. Friendships for the most point I am you do have a few others

[1:02:15](#) **GN:** Good ending point. Okay Midge. Thank you very much.