

Interviewee: Lawrence Menapace
Interviewer: Rich Foy

March 20, 2002
MHP

Lawrence Menapace

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Erin Kelly

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

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Topic: Marist College History

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- Marist Brothers - United States - History
- Marist College History
- Marist College (Poughkeepsie, New York)
- Marist College Social Aspects

Summary: The following interview is with Dr. Lawrence Menapace from the Chemistry Department at Marist College. In the beginning of the interview, Lawrence Menapace gives a brief describes his educational background as well as his professional background, working as a full-time chemist for Texaco. After transferring to Marist College, Lawrence Menapace became a full-time organic chemist. In the interview, Lawrence Menapace compares the environments of Marist College now and in his early teaching years, particularly in terms of the faculty and students. Lawrence Menapace also describes his participation as an Academic Advisor and Assistant Varsity Coach for Marist's basketball team. The interview ends with Lawrence Menapace's account of the differences between students entering the college now and the students enrolled in the college during his earlier teaching years.

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Richard Foy: This is an interview conducted with Dr. Lawrence Menapace of the Chemistry department. We are in the Archive room of the Cannavino Library. The date is Wednesday March 20, 2002 and the interviewer is Rich Foy. Well, good afternoon Larry. Can I call you Larry? [Laughter]

Lawrence Menapace: Sure Richard.

RF: I'd like to ask you some simple biographical questions because I think the students at the college now are coming from a slightly different economic background than you and I did. So where were you born?

LM: Brooklyn.

RF: Brooklyn.

LM: Brooklyn, New York.

RF: What part?

LM: Coney Island.

RF: Oh, okay. Way down.

LM: Yea.

RF: How many are in your family?

LM: I have two brothers and myself.

RF: Are you the oldest?

LM: No, I'm in the middle.

RF: Oh, okay, the poor middle child. [Laughter] Okay, what year were you born?

LM: 1937.

RF: Oh, you're young [Laughter] compared to me. What about your parents? Where were they from or were they...?

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LM: My father was born here but raised in Italy and he returned as a young man and my mother was born in Russia in the Ukraine and migrated into Canada, from Canada to New York.

RF: That's interesting. There's a large Russian colony down in that area right now.

LM: Yea, in Brooklyn, yea.

RF: Are either of them still alive?

LM: My mother is still alive.

RF: Oh. Did your father go through Ellis Island?

LM: I'm not certain about that.

RF: Yea, yea. You could check at this nice website. I've been doing that for my own family. What did he do as his occupation?

LM: A carpenter.

RF: Oh. What about your mother? Did she work?

LM: A waitress.

RF: So they worked their way through.

LM: Yes.

RF: Oh, where did you go to grammar school and high school?

LM: St. Thomas Aquinas in Brooklyn, St. Francis Prep in Brooklyn.

RF: And where'd you go to college?

LM: St. Peter's College in Jersey City.

RF: In Jersey City. How did you choose that one?

LM: I won a scholarship and I wasn't quite sure where to go and I had heard of it. It was like kind of a random thing. I'm not quite sure how I ended up there.

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RF: Did you commute?

LM: Yes.

RF: Was it a long commute?

LM: It was about an hour.

RF: You had to go by car or you took trains?

LM: Either way. If you had a car... I did drive a car for a while but then it got to cost a great deal of money so I decided to take the train.

RF: Take the subways and the tubes.

LM: The subway, and the Hudson tubes and then walk about a mile.

RF: That's interesting. Well, that's... And where did you do your graduate work?

LM: The University of New Hampshire.

RF: How'd you get up there? [Laughter]

LM: One of the teachers I had in college got his Ph.D. there and that's how I ended up there.

RF: How are the academics there at St. Peter's?

LM: In St. Peter's?

RF: In St. Peter's, yea.

LM: Jesuit, structured, you didn't have much choice with respect to what you took. I think I had more credits in Philosophy and Theology than I had in my Chemistry.

RF: Who was the President if you recall?

LM: That escapes me right now. I don't recall.

RF: For a while, Father McGinley (S.J.) was down there but that would have been...

LM: I was not...

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RF: Yea, that would have been after your time. Okay, so you went up to New Hampshire. You obviously did not commute. [Laughter]

LM: No, I was married. As soon as I graduated from college, we left. I left the city for...

RF: Where did Eileen grow up? Your wife is Eileen?

LM: In Brooklyn also.

RF: Oh.

LM: In Park Slope.

RF: Okay, so you're really a Brook-... You don't have a Brooklyn accent.

LM: No, not anymore.

RF: So you did at one time. [Laughter] So you have some children too, don't you?

LM: Yea, two. I had three. One of mine died.

RF: Died, yea. How old are the children now?

LM: They're in their mid-thirties. My daughter's on thirty-eight and my son's on thirty-five.

RF: Wait, what are they doing?

LM: My son's a lawyer. My daughter has her Master's degree in Psychology from Marist College but she's taking care of three boys at this point in time and that's...

RF: If you have three kids, then yea.

LM: A full-time job.

RF: Yea, good. How did she hear about Marist?

LM: When I moved into the area, I just became aware of it and began... I came in 1966 and began to teach one course at night. It was a part-time advanced

course.

RF: Where did you work full-time?

LM: Texaco.

RF: Texaco, yea. And now Michelson is down there.

LM: Yea, yea. He followed me here.

RF: Yea, I know. I just didn't know what the order was. So you taught a course in the evening division.

LM: Yea, I taught it in '66 and '67. I was really not happy with where I was and I wasn't quite sure what I would do about it but Richard, Richard LaPietra, had informed me that they were looking for a full-time organic chemist. And almost as a joke I said, "Well, I might apply" and his response was "If you want the job, it's yours." I don't know whether he had checked with you first. [Laughter]

RF: No, no. I never...

LM: He...

RF: I never controlled my people.

LM: But he was anxious to have me here.

RF: Yes.

LM: He made that very clear. The big problem was money... It was a dramatic...

RF: You must've taken a pay-cut.

LM: Dramatic difference. From eighteen down to around ten, and obviously at that point in time with the family and bills to pay and mortgage to pay. It really put me on the spot because I felt I would never get this chance again and also, I could change jobs and I'd have to move. I mean, I really did like living in this area and we had talked about it at

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great lengths, “Could we manage with that cut in pay?” and I really felt that if something was a once in a lifetime thing... And when we decided that, we would not do it and my wife and I went back to work and...

RF: Where did she work at?

LM: A secretary.

RF: Yea, yea. So she’s not a college graduate?

LM: No, she’s not.

RF: Yea, yea. So she worked when you came here but that’s the only way we could make ends meet?

LM: I think so at that point in time, it was just a really big cut in pay to take. It was tough to make but I knew I had to make the move. I didn’t think I could stay where I was for the rest of my professional career forever and I really wasn’t happy. It wasn’t much of a challenge.

RF: There was no talk of their relocating at that time though?

LM: No, no. No, no. They were firmly, firmly entrenched. The first time I walked through a classroom door, I knew I had the challenge that I wanted.

RF: That’s interesting. Which, besides Rich LaPietra, which other Brothers did you first meet?

LM: Brian Desilets.

RF: Was Andy Molloy here?

LM: Andrew was not here. He had left. That’s why I was able to get the job because Andrew left and there was a woman who was doing it from Vassar, Marjorie Crawford.

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RF: Oh, yes. She was a retiree.

LM: She was only here for a couple of years.

RF: Yea, Crawford and Ed Lenner.

LM: Crawford and Lenner too...

RF: Two retirees from Vassar to get the average age of the faculty up. [Laughter]

LM: Right.

RF: So you knew what Brothers were because you had Brothers at St. Francis Prep and...

LM: I did.

RF: Franciscan Brothers.

LM: Yea, yea. Dan Kirk was here at the time. They (LaPietra and Molloy) both became the dean. Hugh Turley was in biology.

RF: That's right.

LM: I bet there are more. There was another person in physics who died.

RF: Joe Marchessault. Joseph Kirk. He died before you though.

LM: No, there was another one. Maybe it wasn't in physics. I thought it was. Anyway, those are some of the names that I remember.

RF: Yea, that you remember. Yea, there was a graduate who taught physics. I think he taught it part-time. I forget his name but he worked up at New Paltz and he taught here.

LM: I had the Brothers in my classes in the advanced chemistry course I taught.

RF: Yea, so you got here in terms of the Brothers, I guess what is considered a very...
A turning point in terms of the student Brothers.

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LM: Yea, my first year full-time time would be the first year that we accepted women.

It was 1968 so that was... I was on right there when things began to change...

RF: When things began to change...

LM: In a very dramatic way.

RF: And the student Brothers, at the beginning, were living in what's the Fontaine building here but eventually they moved over to Gregory and Benoit.

LM: And I think they were all over there when I came, in Gregory and Benoit.

RF: So you knew... How were the student Brothers as students?

LM: Good students. I mean, that was never a problem. Serious, good discipline.

RF: Yes and good study habits.

LM: Good, good amount of students, yea.

RF: What did... How did you feel coming onto the faculty? Sometimes when somebody joins a faculty which is run by a religious order, they're made to feel a little bit like second-class citizens.

LM: I never felt that. I was very comfortable with the Catholic environment. I remember the days when we started the class with a prayer, the crucifix in every room, I was fine with that.

RF: Yes. So you're comfortable and there's no...

LM: Very, very comfortable.

RF: No feeling of a second class citizen?

LM: No, absolutely not. I never felt that at all.

RF: Then you also, like myself, you saw a lot of Brothers leave or stay on.

LM: Yes.

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RF: That didn't...?

LM: Well, early on they had to leave like Andrew Molloy and then apparently that changed and they left the Brothers but stayed on, Richard among others.

RF: Yea, I think with Molloy that was his own choosing. He could've stayed.

LM: Yea, okay but...

RF: Basically, you're right. At that stage, he just felt he didn't want to be the pioneer.

LM: Yea.

RF: In doing this, you know, but he certainly would have been welcomed because he always had a sense of Christian community whether he was a Brother or not.

LM: Well, if he had stayed, I would not have come. [Laughter] So I guess things have a way of working out.

RF: Yes. What do you think has happened to the students since then? How would you compare the students now with the students in the 60's? That's almost thirty years ago.

LM: Well, it was very Irish Catholic and I think at that point in time, the bulk from Long Island, sons and daughters of firemen and policemen, kind of low, moderate income which seemed...

RF: You could relate to for instance.

LM: Yea and the Marist tradition is teaching to the lower income people, families of farmers and that sort of family that was very important here and prevalent. Of course that's obviously changed now. The influence is clear. I mean, it's a bit different from what it was then. I think it more varied than it was, more diversified.

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RF: How would you compare the students at Marist with your own children, which is the generation below you?

LM: I'm not clear on that, what we're looking at.

RF: Well, I think we're, you know, we can relate to low and middle income students because that's where we grew up.

LM: Right.

RF: I grew up in the Bronx. You grew up in Brooklyn.

LM: Right.

RF: Your kids grew up in Dutchess.

LM: Yea. So...

RF: Now they make everybody consider themselves poor. [Laughter] But probably we're not poor for the way we were.

LM: Right. Yea, yea, that's true.

RF: And now, would you say that's what's happening to the students, yes? They don't seem to be coming from the slums.

LM: No.

RF: Or the barrios.

LM: No, they clearly have more expendable money available to them.

RF: Yea. What about their academic preparation?

LM: I find at times it's not where I would want it to be. Students do not write well, they don't speak well. I spent a lot of time encouraging people to write. I make them write. All of my laboratories involved the writing of a lab report, a lot of prose and a lot of schools don't do that. They ask you to fill out a form and you put down the numbers

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and the grams that you start with, how many grams did you end up with and I think we have to encourage our students to write and so I do make a great effort to get students to write and although they hate it at the time, I'm going to hear at a later time, they tell me how well it has served them that I did encourage them to write and they did develop that skill.

RF: You have a good example in my daughter. You know, she's her third year in medical school and she has to make presentations and you know, formally her presentations are the best or most praised by the medical staffs at the hospitals.

LM: Yea.

RF: So somehow she's got the training of how to make a presentation.

LM: Yea, that kind of discipline is very important to me. I mean, I really stress that. Study hard in an organized way, approach everything in kind of a chronological way and look at the data and analyze the data and know what you can say and what you can't say. I really stress that and I've heard that many of our students who go onto medical school and graduate school, how well that has a certain... And they seem to do much better than other students from very prestigious schools. So I have heard that.

RF: Right, right. I can give you pretty good testimony on that. You came in '68. At that time, year, '68 was your first full-time?

LM: First full-time.

RF: And by that time, the college was going to have a Board of Trustees which was predominantly lay men. Did you have any recognition of that at the time or that didn't matter to you?

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LM: I don't recall it having any impact on me. I knew we had to move to a lay school because of that financial aid that we were missing out on and that made sense to me that we had to go there but I don't recall it having any dramatic impact on me.

RF: What do you think will happen as the number of Brothers dwindles and gets down to very few teachers?

LM: Well, there's a dramatic change which is going on now and I think as those of us who are still left who operate under the old model leave, then their model will be firmly entrenched and that will be gone and the old model, that at least the way I look at it, is kind of a family model and we were all in that together. We all had the same goals in the good of the institution, the welfare of the students. Service was very important.

Teaching was very important. That's was what we were told and that was most important. Teaching and service and we did what we had to do. We didn't count hours. We didn't count days. You did everything that you had to do to further the ends of the institution and I do think of those days as kind of a family environment in which we knew everybody and we knew their spouses and children and socialized. Now it's a business model as I see it, as in employer, employees and the goal of the employer seems to be to get as much out of the employees as they can get so they continue to add to meet demands like the searches for scholarship but they also expect you to do everything you've always done before and that has I think, presents a problem because you can't do it all and so something has to give and what I find giving is the service. It is the availability to students. I think this is a serious matter. I think it's going on. You see more and more people who are not here at all on those certain days of the week and they call that a research day and they won't come in. Some people are only here three days a

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week and I think this is happening. I don't think it's in the best interest of the institution. It certainly is not in the best interest of the students. We're now... We've always had to put five office hours a week on the door. For me, that was a formality. My door was always open. I was here eight or ten hours a day. My students could come in at any time. Now it's more like you come during those five office hours or I'm not available. I don't know how we can go on claiming that we're a small liberal arts institution and that our main mission is teaching and yet we seem to be getting away from that. Something has to give. I think it's a very serious matter that's going on and morale is being affected in a very serious way. I think our students complain a lot that they can not find a faculty member or somebody to sign their forms. This is more than prevalent and somebody needs to address that. I think it's very ominous.

RF: Yea, it's... Of course well I found, maybe I was in the wrong place when I was teaching. Last year, I spent a lot of time in my office and very few students came. Yea, but then all of a sudden they all wanted to come two days before the test.

LM: Oh, nonetheless.

RF: Things like that but I think in labs you have a natural situation for interaction because you're there and the kids are there and it's not structured where they all have to sit there. They're doing things. They're moving around so it's not a tailored time.

LM: Yea.

RF: But if it's in Philosophy or Religion or History...

LM: It's all classroom.

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RF: The teacher has to make... He has to create situations where students will talk to him more, they can work back and forth. So you feel the younger ones really haven't caught onto this, the younger teachers?

LM: Well, I think they're functioning the way they were taught to function. When they were hired, they were hired with the new model in mind. It's a business model and you're expected to do certain things and you want to do them and they thought they were to rule. It's a different environment and the ones who struggle with it are the people who are being forced to accept a new model but still think about operating under the old model and if that's... And it doesn't work. You can't be asked to publish two or three papers within a five or six year round period in science and have any time available for service or meeting with our students. We just can't do it and we're told that if you don't do it, you're going to be judged unsatisfactory which means you... Like you don't get a raise for one thing but just the humiliation of being told that you're unsatisfactory is simply not good for morale.

RF: Okay. Let's move a little to the buildings. You've seen a lot of construction go on.

LM: Yea.

RF: You think that's...?

LM: Donnelly Hall was three academic buildings and to think about that now, it's mind boggling. Almost all the classrooms were there. Almost all the offices were there. Some were in Fontaine but almost all the teaching was done in Donnelly Hall which staggers the imagination.

RF: It made it more for a family situation.

LM: Oh yea.

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RF: Because you kept running into each other in the hallways.

LM: Absolutely. There was a faculty lounge. You could go in there and always find somebody. It's different now but there are times...

RF: But now it seems to be...

LM: Very spread out.

RF: There are kingdoms.

LM: Yea.

RF: Very spread out. The English department, they're over in Fontaine. The Math department...

LM: I would... If I go to a faculty meeting, I think I could identify maybe, maybe about twenty percent by name, maybe. The rest I don't know. It's small schools now are separated with... There's no sense of community here. I don't think there is, which is a big change from what we had.

RF: There was a time, yea. Oh, part of that is going from 1,500 to 3,000 students.

LM: Yea, sure.

RF: You have to essentially double the size of your campus.

LM: Yea, no doubt.

RF: It's not all in one place anymore.

LM: Yea.

RF: What about athletics here? What do you think about our Athletic program? Well, you've seen it develop.

LM: Yea, I was here when we moved from Division III to Division I.

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RF: Yea. Did you coach for...?

LM: I was a freshman coach for a couple years. I was Assistant Varsity Coach and then I stopped for a while and then I came back and was an Academic Advisor in the early eighties. I was Academic Advisor and Assistant Coach both. So I traveled with the team. I was asked to get involved too as we moved into Division I to make sure that the academic standards were being met. When I came there was very, very serious concern that as we moved into Division I, we'd put scholarships at such a that we'd let the academic standards slide and so I was... The President asked me to get involved and I did. I spent a lot of time with that and during my time as academic advisor, they had graduation ready for scholarship basketball players who stayed here for four years, as one hundred percent and the national average was around thirty-five percent. So, you know, something that I'm very proud of.

RF: You should be proud of it.

LM: I stayed on top of them. I made sure they all went to class. I made sure I knew about their grades. When we went on the road I had conducted study halls. I would get assignments and they knew they had to go to class. I mean, the basketball players knew that I would know if they didn't and we would throw them out of practice if they missed class. So by means of intimidation, by fear or whatever, they went to class and that was half the battle and getting them to do assignments, getting them help, whatever but it worked.

RF: Were you here during the Smits era? What was the Rik Smits era?

LM: I taught Rik Smits some what he knows actually. [Laughter] I remember him coming and he was... His skills were undeveloped and no one had any expectation that

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what ultimately happened would happen. In fact, we were going to red-shirt him in his first year because we did not think he was ready and his experience was equivalent of a CYO. That was his total experience and he was 7'2" or 7'3" but he knew nothing about the game, at least not at this level and the player that we were going to play center broke a bone in his foot just before the start of the season.

RF: [Pecarski].

LM: [Pecarski] and we activated Rik and after the sixth game... He didn't start the first five games. He started in game six and the rest is history. His ability to learn and develop were absolutely extraordinary and he was very smart and he listened. When you taught him something, he remembered it and he did it and so it was... But no one ever expected that to happen. I mean he was big but nobody expected him to be that good.

RF: Were you here for Donovan? He was...

LM: Yea, yea.

RF: Donovan was...

LM: Another big kid but couldn't play. I mean, he just wasn't very strong. I mean, his problem was he just was big kid, very skinny and just didn't have the strength.

RF: Yea, and I don't think he ever developed it or whatever.

LM: No, no, he didn't. We had sent him to All Sport. We did all sorts of things trying to build up his strength. He just couldn't put the weight on. He just couldn't put it on.

RF: It looks like this [Josepher] kid is something, I bet. This year they have, you know, it's... They use him for three minutes and he's 7'. So some kids develop and some kids don't. Who were your coaches? Did you start with Petro?

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LM: Petro and Furjanic and then we went through three more coaches in three years and I... Actually I was very interested in becoming the head coach. That was my goal. That was my dream and I applied for it every time and we had a revolving door thing. We hired Perry and he left before he...

RF: Ever coached a game, yea.

LM: Furjanic, he didn't work out and he stayed only a couple years and left under unfavorable circumstances and then Magarity was hired and each of those times I did apply and I obviously never got the job. Magarity came and he didn't show any interest in having me as part of his team so I left and went in one high school and coached at the high school level for ten years.

RF: Ten years?

LM: Yes.

RF: Wow.

LM: Well, it was hard for me to leave here. I never wanted to leave here but Magarity, for whatever reason, the fact that I went after the job or whatever, but it was clear that it was time... It was time for me to move on and if I wanted to coach, I obviously had to go to a different... I did coach at Mount St. Mary's. I coached the women's team there for a year. I didn't enjoy that as much so then I went to high school and that worked out very well.

RF: Women have to be treated differently. [Laughter]

LM: Yea.

RF: But yea, there's still good players and everything.

LM: Oh sure.

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RF: They have that feminine temperament and you have to take that into account.

LM: Yea.

RF: It's not that easy whereas with men, you can be a little rougher, gruffer and work it out. What about the other athletics? There seems to be an awful lot of sports going on here.

LM: Yea, it's the tail... The tail is wagging the dog on that one. I guess you have to. If you go to Division I, you have to field a certain number of Division I teams so we had to do that and to be honest, we have a lot of teams, scholarships, etcetera and I guess it's alright. I don't know.

RF: There seems to be an awful lot of kids participating.

LM: Yea, we have a lot of other teams.

RF: But I was looking at the websites saying the girls lost in the water polo.

[Laughter]

LM: We have a water polo team?

RF: A club, apparently.

LM: Oh, okay.

RF: But they went I forget, they traveled someplace. Yea, so... Oh, yea, they're going out to Whittier College in California.

LM: Is that right? A club is going to California?

RF: Yea.

LM: Who's paying for that?

RF: So, it's a... But I saw a young lady with a water polo jacket on but there seems to be an awful lot of sports, which is probably good.

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LM: Yes.

RF: It may be indicative of American culture too.

LM: Yea.

RF: That the type of kids we're getting are coming out of schools where sports are emphasized and I particularly like the non Division I sports, you know the soccer and so on because they are Division I but they don't get the stress the basketball does.

LM: Yea, yea. Nobody's going to knock at that.

RF: Yea.

LM: That's our flagship.

RF: Yea, that's a good for it, flagship yea. Okay, how long are you going to stay teaching here? [Laughter]

LM: Well, that's not clear with me now. I don't think it's going to be more than a year or two more.

RF: This year you're sixty-five.

LM: I'm sixty-five.

RF: And you can teach as long as you want but...

LM: And as long as they want me.

RF: Yea.

LM: But my sense right now is that only another year, maybe two years at the most.

RF: Yea, so you're joining a long list of departees.

LM: Yea, yea.

RF: Petro, Zuccarello.

LM: Louis is...

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RF: Yea.

LM: Is in his last year. Richard and Andy Molloy are gone.

RF: Yea.

LM: Kevin Carolan.

RF: Zig Rancourt. (Brother Richard Rancourt) Yea.

LM: I heard that now. I'm pretty sure of him.

RF: I guess that they're heavily in your role as well. Something very funny about that.

Tell me a little bit about Mal Michelson. He was so interesting. He was a Chemistry major but I don't remember him so much for Chemistry.

LM: No, he was an activist. He was against the Vietnam War. He organized people to be against that. He was very active and that was really his love, correcting social wrongs and trying to educate people about how wrong the Vietnam War was and that's what he was into.

RF: And he got into running some programs here, didn't he? Community Action programs or something like that?

LM: Yes, he did. He was intervening and dividing old programs. He did some of a lot of other stuff, being against the war type of thing and being against the establishment, as it was called back then. But he was very into that 60's anti-war and anti-establishments.

RF: Does he still live in this area?

LM: Yea, he lives upstate around Elmira.

RF: Yea because he was back I think for one of the Science Alumni meetings.

LM: He came back for Richard's retirement.

RF: Yea, yea. So he's... What about Bob Rehwoldt?

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LM: Well, he's passed away.

RF: Yea. Did he come before you?

LM: He was here when I came or was he? We came roughly about the same time. He had moved over from Vassar in some question about tenure and he came here and obviously had a pretty good career here.

RF: Yea, did he move on to another place?

LM: He took an NSF job in Washington actually dealing with handicap funding.

RF: And he was handicapped?

LM: He was handicapped, yes.

RF: Yea, he was in Chemistry.

LM: Analytical Chemistry.

RF: Analytical Chemistry, yea. Did you feel the labs were adequate when you first came?

LM: No, they've never been. We went from primitive to kind of borderline acceptable in where we are now but we just don't have the money to put it into the instrumentation, which is very, very expensive and the good instruments we have, we got as gifts. Texaco, when they closed up shop, gave us only a couple of instruments which we would never, ever have been able to purchase like \$3,000 or \$4,000 instruments. So we are for a school our size, I would say we're adequate but only because we got...

RF: Got gifts.

LM: Some instruments as gifts.

RF: Yea. How do you think Chemistry department saw another school of our size, Siena or Le Moyne or something like that. Are they facing the same problems?

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LM: Well, we're... Our big problem is our laboratories are so run-down and dilapidated. It's a tough sell. I mean in a lot... St. Peter's College for instance just renovated \$8 million. They completely renovated their science building. They have a state of the art science building and other schools that we compete with have much better labs than we have. It's a very... It would seem to me it's a very tough sell to somebody who visits here and visits there and sees the state of our laboratories, which are primitive really. If they judge just from that, it would be a hard choice for them to come here, to look beyond that, the quality of our faculty, the fact that our students go to graduate school and medical school and flourish. If they focus on that, they would see that we have a good product that we offer. And the quality of the education in chemistry has always been outstanding. Outstanding.

RF: What about, I guess you'd call Health Sciences, rather than just pure chemistry? Do you get a lot of students from that coming in? A lot of our Health Sciences being, I think it could be many things...

LM: Oh, we have a Med-Tech major, which is a Health Science. I mean, we now have Athletic Training as a major but we are expanding in that area. The Nursing, we had trouble and we had to give it up.

RF: That's very expensive.

LM: Yea and the Biology is kind of a training ground for medical school and so I think the people who are interested in medical school also have a problem. We don't... We do fairly well at getting students into medical school but it's not the M.D. schools that we get people into very often. It's more the D.O. schools and I don't think there's any difference in the training but it's kind of an attitudinal thing that D.O. schools are less

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prestigious than the M.D. schools. I think when you get out of either one, your training is the same. You're able to do the same things but people don't understand that there's a... If they see M.D. and D.O. after a name, they'll say what is D.O.?

RF: Yes.

LM: And then they go, "What kind of training do you have?" and "Are you a real doctor?"

RF: A real doctor, yea. Are you a chiropractor?

LM: Yea, yea. So that's a problem for us I think that the record of getting people into M.D. schools is not good.

RF: Well, what do you think the problem is then? Is it intelligence or lack of preparation? Is there anything is can be attributed to?

LM: I'm not sure of what it is. We have a student who graduated only a couple years ago and he had a 3.997 and this kid was a genius level kid, the smartest kid I have ever seen and he did research and did all the things you were supposed to do and I thought they'd be clamoring at the door and that kid had a hard time getting into an M.D. school and ended in Buffalo, which is okay but it's not Duke, you know, or where he wanted to go. I never understood that. Even the quality kids that we have, they do well in the MCATS and this kid had outstanding scores on the MCATS. He had everything going for him. He was rejected by most of the M.D. schools that he applied to and I don't know the answer, whether it's prestige, whether if you compare a kid from Marist to a kid from an Ivy league school, well if everything else is the same, you want to take the Ivy league school. Maybe that's what it is. We're just not well enough known or they question the standards.

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RF: Are you here for Peter [Perner], remember him at all?

LM: Peter?

RF: I think his name was [Perner].

LM: That does not ring a bell.

RF: He applied to Harvard and didn't get in. George Hooper would know the story.

At any rate, it turned out that Harvard had a ranking so that a 4.0 index at Marist turned out to be like a 3.2 index at Dartmouth. So we worked out... I was still President. We were going to start a lawsuit and Harvard solved it by saying they would let him in next year. Of course they denied they did it but...

LM: Well, I mean...

RF: It was pretty clear.

LM: There's something going on when students that are as good as the one that I described...

RF: Yea, can't get in.

LM: Can't get in, clearly there's something wrong.

RF: Yea.

LM: There's something going on beyond just the objective data.

RF: Yea. How would you classify places like New York Medical? Would that be...
Would you consider that an A school or...?

LM: I don't know. I can't... I mean I can't answer that. I'm not privy to that.

RF: To the New York... Good. Well, do you have any ideas or any suggestions for the college? [Laughter]

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LM: Well, I think what I've alluded to before... I think the administration has to take a hard look at the constant demands that they are placing on the faculty and the impact that that it's having on service and teaching. I mean, we are being delivered a message that with respect to service, in the sense that it doesn't count for anything. We're being... That message is being delivered from the administration very loud and very clear and that's a departure from when I came when service and teaching was what we were supposed to do. Scholarship was what you fit in around that. And the model work, okay, and we are told now that service counts for nothing, essentially nothing and I think that will not serve the institution well and if you place so many demands upon the institution, then the student... The undergraduate education of the students begins to suffer and I think we're going in the wrong direction and I think somebody has to take a very, very hard look at that.

RF: Okay. John, do you have any questions.

John Ansley (Head of Archives and Special Collections): No, not yet.

RF: You're sort of an outsider. Larry and I know each other quite well.

JA: Since you're talking about the administration, you had a chance to work with Richard and now working with Dr. Murray, just if... If now, since Richard is sitting right here, I don't know if you care to elaborate on the different styles but I thought that would be interesting.

LM: Well, I think Foy built the foundation. Murray built on that. That's the way I see it.

JA: Okay.

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LM: You know, both served at a different time with a different need. We had to establish ourselves as a school, as a legitimate four-year college. I think Foy did that for us and paved the way for what came next.

JA: You had made a comment about the transfer of the college or you alluded to that. Did that affect you at all when the college transferred from the Marist Brothers to the college corporation?

LM: It had no effect on me, no.

JA: Did you think it was a good move for the college or...?

LM: I thought it was something that we had to do. I think financially we could not afford to not get the state and federal aid if we had stayed a Catholic school. We had no endowment, we had no money to fall back on. I mean, it was money in and money out. The budget was balanced on tuition. We just could not afford. We weren't a school that had been around for one hundred years and had lots and lots of money and endowment money. We had no endowment. Considering the type of kid that we attracted, there was no money and the old lady was not going to die and give us ten million dollars to build a building. That wasn't going to happen. At Vassar, it happens once a month. [Laughter] You know? It just doesn't happen so we had to do it.

JA: Do you feel the attitude of the students is changing from when you started in the 60's?

LM: Yea, there's a big difference. In attitude, it's more like they function like consumers now and the parents kind of support this. I think they see what's happening here as they have paid for a product and they expect to get it and if the student doesn't do well in a course, it's your fault. It's almost like I bet "We paid all this money, then the

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kid should pass” and I think that’s happening more and more now and at one point in time, that was not the case. They understood, “You want to pass, you do the work” and now it’s like “I paid the money. I should pass.” I think that’s beginning to happen.

JA: That’s interesting. Are there any other topics that we didn’t cover that you’d like to discuss?

LM: No, I think we covered a lot of history.

RF: Well, one of the reasons for keeping this down to the hour is that we can then... If you have some second thoughts we can always conduct a second interview.

LM: Sure.

RF: And do it as time goes on and I think at some time, what we may want to do is get maybe three or four people.

LM: Oh, I think that would be interesting.

RF: And then say let’s talk about these topics.

LM: Yea.

RF: You know, we’re working off your perspective and sometimes it helps to have other people.

LM: Oh, sure.

RF: To increase it. Okay, I want to thank you very much Larry for coming in.

LM: Good.

RF: And John probably has some papers for you to sign.

LM: Right.

RF: And what will happen is this will be put on a CD and then eventually it will be put onto... Typed down but don’t hold your breath on that. [Laughter]

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“END OF INTERVIEW”