

P=Pat
B=Barbara

Interview with: Pat Moysenko.
Interviewed by: Barbara K. Bruno
Date: May 3, 1988

TAPE I, SIDE A BEGINS:

B: Today is May 3rd, 1988. My name is Barbara Bruno and I'm here in Weed Hall in room 101 with Pat Moysenko, and we're about to begin Pat's oral history.

() Pat, as I think I'd like to begin the oral history by having you tell me a little bit about where you were born and a little bit about what you remember of your early family life.

P: Okay. I was born in 1950, here in Lowell and this is um, I find it kind of peculiar anyway. Um, I was born here in Lowell and the house that I first came home to and where I lived for the first ten years of my life was immediately across the street from Coburn Hall. There was a row of five little cape style houses there. And my mother says that as a kid, before I went to school, when they would talk about my going to school and you're going to be starting first grade, that I was insistant that I was going to that school right across the street. And it cracks me right up, because eventually I did do that.

Um, but I spent the first ten years of my life living in Lowell, in that house. Um, and I did go... I did not go to that school immediately across the street. Um, I started off here in St. Patrick's grammar school here in Lowell. And then my family, when I was in about the middle of fifth grade moved to Lawrence. Not a big move, but enough that I had to change school systems and what not. I continued in parochial school there in Lawrence growing up. And eventually as time evolved, I am the

oldest of a fairly large family, there were six children altogether and my parents.... Um, I have two sisters and three brothers, as I said all of them younger.... Um, and we eventually kind of came along. I was... The idea was that I was the responsible one, making sure that so and so had his mittens before he left school and you know, all of that kind of stuff.

Um, let me think what else. I went through elementary school in Lawrence and graduated. And started high school in Lawrence and finished high school in Lawrence, St. Mary's High School in Lawrence. And someplace in around, in or around um, actually before I graduated from grammar school... And I cannot for the life of me remember what sparked my interest, but I got interested in nursing as a profession, or as a career. I think probably I got exposed to the usual Sherry Ames and Sue Barton books you know, at that period of time. And somehow nursing seem to me to be something that was really very interesting, because I remember talking to my parents about becoming a nurse, being a nurse very early on. I mean, definitely before high school the idea had got planted in my head.

B: Tell me a little bit about your mother and father.

P: Okay. My father is basically an educator. He's semi retired at this point, but he's been a teacher. He's a history major, graduated from Boston College. Um, and he's gone through, he's been a teacher, he's taught in several different school systems, including a system in Lawrence that dealt with um.... I don't know quite exactly how to put them. What did they use to call them? What was the term?

B: Juvenile delinquents I think was what they use to call them. Boys who got into trouble on occasion.

P: Um, more... Well actually both boys and girls. More boys than girls kind of thing. Um, and I remember, because as... It was a very traditional family. Dad worked and Mom was a housewife kind of thing, or whatever one wants to call that at this point in life. That's not a term you hear used any longer. Um, but she essentially raised six children, so she was very much occupied kind of thing. In fact, I can remember being family and you know, having different things, you know, needing different things, that Dad very often worked two jobs. Um, and he supplemented his full time job income by teaching weekends, evenings, you name it kind of thing. So he essentially worked two jobs to you know, keep us going and keep things going. And I wouldn't say... we weren't poor, but we weren't rich. I mean we didn't lack for anything, but sometimes you had to wait a little while for a few things on occasion. And I think that that was fairly typical at least of the people that I hung around with. They worked very hard to give us what they thought was necessary in very many respects. Not only you know, monetary respects, but um, love you know, just general upbringing kind of thing.

I remember one of the things that they felt. They were a very strongly catholic family. And one of the things they felt was essential was number one, a good education. And they felt the way

to do that was a catholic education. And they worked very hard to put most of us... Not everybody wound up, but to put most of us through an excellent education, you know, a good education. Not all of us have gone to college, but not all of us have chosen, you know, to go to college either. So that they've made a real effort to help us in whatever we've sought to do, whether it was college or whatever and been as supportive as they can, you know, they could be.

B: You mentioned that you recalled saying very early in life that you wanted to be a nurse and you related it to some of the books that were out. I think Sherry Ames was one that you mentioned.

(P: Umhm) What was your parent's reaction when you told them that you wanted to be a nurse? Can you remember?

P: Um, I don't remember a specific reaction, but I remember positive feedback you know, for my desire kind of thing. They had no objection to it whatsoever. In fact I'd go to the library and take out the books, or occasionally I'd get you know, as a birthday gift or a Christmas gift a book dealing with nurses, you know, of that nature, appropriate to my age at the time. This was elementary school. Um, so that they very definitely were aware of my interest and tended to foster my interest.

In fact, I would actually say and this might be jumping ahead again in terms of an oral history, but when it came time to choose where I would go to school, um, at that point in life there were many schools available. And I don't mean just you know, many different schools, I mean as there are now, there were different ways to go about becoming a nurse. There was a four year Baccalaureate program. There was a... And very many more at that point in life. Three year diploma programs and the two year associate programs were just beginning to be um, very popular, you know, in this area. And I can remember as, oh say, a junior in high school, that era, being every... in a quandary as to what should I do, or where should I go? And I must say that I'm not putting down a catholic education at all, but I must say very frankly that the Guidance Department in the school that I went to was not strong kind of thing. They were strong in other suits, but that wasn't their strongest suit. So I was always left feeling that I was a little up in the air with this decision. And it was my father really who probably would admit even to this day and age that he knows very little about nursing as a profession, who really steered me in what I found has been I think the right direction kind of thing.

He kind of looked at different programs with me. He went to career nights with me. And just based on his experience, he was really encouraging to go into a collegiate kind of program over the other programs. He felt that if I changed my mind at some later point in life, that that would still be very marketable. I could use some of my undergrad things to do other things with, or it would give me a step ahead if I wanted to go on in nursing and what have you. So he was very, very instrumental in my selecting to go the route that I did, in a collegiate program kind of thing.

B: That's great! (P: ya) So I think we've gotten you to about grammar school and then we talked about the decision. What was happening?

Anything.... Were there any T.V. programs on at that time highlighting nurses, or anything that you can recollect that even made you feel stronger about your choice?

P: I don't recollect media kinds of things, T.V. programs, or movies, or anything of that nature. I really think that my strongest in terms of any kinds of media impetus were these books, the Sherry Ames and the Sue Barton. I think too that it kind of went along with what I was feeling at the time. I was as I said, the oldest of six children and you might imagine um, that in that position you wind up taking alot of responsibility for other little things. Mom couldn't possibly be every place at once. You know, so it was... I very often babysat for my family, and then as I got older I, you know, throughout the neighborhood and for family, friends and relatives. And I always liked knowing what to do you know, in a particular situation kind of thing.

Nursing struck me as being a very responsible profession and I was always being given the positive stroke at that point in life, that I was a very responsible individual kind of thing. So it really seemed to go hand in hand. It also seem to be a very interesting kind of thing. Um, you have to remember that this is being told from the perspective of a ten, or eleven, or twelve year old kind of thing, which is not necessarily the same perspective I hold today. (giggles) But it seemed very, I don't know, for lack of a better term, maybe a romantic kind of thing to do. I mean nurses had all kinds of things you could do. You could work in a hospital, and when you got into a hospital there were all kinds of places in a hospital, really interesting facets in a hospital that you could get into. Or you could look at community health nursing. You could work in a physician's office. There was so many different things. And it was... I think in retrospect, though I didn't realize it at the time, all of it was very hands on and interactive with people, which I guess I was at the time though I didn't realize it kind of thing. I tended as a kid to be very shy, which somehow, somewhere along the line I've lost alot of that kind of thing. Ah, but it just seem to fit the bill.

I do think in retrospect too that there were several professions if you will, or occupations that seem to be suitable for women you know, at that point in time too, teaching and secretarial and nursing and those kinds of things. The others didn't interest me much at all. Nursing was really as far as I could see from these books, it had all kinds of wonderful opportunities. Wonderful avenues to explore. You know, places you could be and things you could do and interacting with all kinds of people kind of thing that really just made me feel.... Um, also had marvelous things like working in the middle of the night. I mean, whoever did that? Now I'd do anything to get out of it kind of thing. (laughs) But at the time to a twelve year old that seemed wow, you know, just something so exciting to do! That you were taking care of everything while everybody else was sleeping. How marvelous kind of thing! And knowing just what to do in an emergency situation, which was always my fear I think in the back of my mind. I was always afraid that I was going to be babysitting and some incident would present itself and maybe I wouldn't quite know how to deal with it kind of thing. So that was

all tied in. I remember you know, those kinds of feelings all tied in with my motivation into going into nursing, at least initially. Then as life wore on things got hopefully a little more mature I think, but I remember that being my initial impetus.

I think too, probably part of the idea that alot of my impetus came from books was the fact that at that point in life I was an avid reader. I mean, I would do anything to read, to be able to have the time to read all kinds of things. I use to pretend, lock myself in the bathroom pretending I was occupied in there to avoid doing other things. And yes I was occupied in there with a book kind of thing! (Laughs) You know, my nose in a book kind of thing. And I'd love to be able to do that at this day, in this day and age and to fun kind of reading. I get to do that on vacations and what not, but that was really my, I think initial thrust into it.

B: So you and your father attended alot of career counseling programs?

P: I can remember they had, back oh, it must have been sophomore, junior year in high school, they did career nights and had a different profession in different schools represented at the school and in the area. And I can remember a couple. And for him really, to give him credit I can't say enough. For him to be able to find the time to go in the evening with a kid to a program was really, you know, a plus kind of thing. I mean he had to make the time to do this kind of thing. My mother is not...she's very supportive, but she is not necessarily as educationally oriented kind of thing. And she'll tell you. I mean, she would make sure that the house was clean and the kids were fed and they were clean and all of your basic needs were met, but as far as education was concerned she would tell you, "I got C's in school", she'd say, "ask your father". (Both laugh) So that fell to him you know, to do that. And I can remember him going... I think too, I was the oldest and as things go down the line you know, um, we help each other kind of thing. I can remember taking over some of those things, those advice giving kinds of things with maybe my younger siblings myself, but um, he was really there, you know, for me. He made himself, he rearranged his schedule to make sure we could get to these career nights. He, I can remember helping me with the application forms for the colleges and the what they called in those days, the parent's confidential statement, because money was a little tight again also. Um, you know he was the one who was up to his eyeballs in all of this and helping me get things off the ground.

B: You applied to...was it known as the University of Lowell at that time?

P: No. At that point in life this was Lowell State College, um, there was Lowell State College and Lowell TEch, Lowell Technological Institute. And they were two different colleges within the city. Before I graduated from here...

B: What year was that Pat?

P: Um, well we're talking about actually getting down to the nitty gritty of things, I graduated from high school in 68, so we're probably talking 67ish, somewhere in that ballpark that I was really beginning to actually get down to yes, this is what I want and these are the places I want to apply to, and taking the college boards and the SAT's and all of those kinds of things. Um, somewhere in...I remember taking college boards actually early on. I probably started taking them, I wanted to have the best scores that you could get you know, probably my sophomore year taking PSAT's and what have you. But by the time I was actually taking college boards and making out applications for school, we're talking somewhere in the 67 ballpark, you know, somewhere in that area. So there was Lowell State and Lowell Tech. And there was still many, many three year programs in the area alive and very viable.

B: Did you apply to any of the three year...()?

P: Nope, I would say that was probably first decision, decision one. Well decision one was, do I really want to do this, kind of thing, and how to go about doing it. And then decision two was, not so much specifically where do I want to go, but as I started to explore things I realized that there were these four year colleges that granted a Bachelor's Degree. That there were schools of nursing, that most of them seemed to run three years and they were different and how they were different and you know, exploring that. And I can't remember exactly when the two year programs cropped up. I know Middlesex Community College didn't... Well it may have existed, but their nursing program didn't exist at that point. Northern Essex came into existence somewhere in that area, but I can't specifically remember whether they existed at the time I was looking, but there were others around.

So the first decision really was, which way am I going to go? And that's the one Dad, I think, was extremely instrumental in helping me make. So I never even applied to a two year program, or to a three year program, only to collegiate type programs. And I applied....actually this part of the tape you might want to edit. (Laughs) Actually, and I think it's an oldest daughter syndrome, I applied to Boston College, which is where my father went. And that's where I really, I think wanted to go kind of thing. I applied to North Eastern and then I applied here. And I applied here I remember, later than the other two, because I already had acceptances from the other two when I came for an interview here with Dr. Barker. Because I can remember, and honest to God how bold can you be at that age, what was I all of seventeen, saying to her, well, you know this is very nice and I would very strongly consider Lowell State College, but I need to know whether you're interested in me by such and such a date, because I have to respond to BC and North Eastern. And how presumptuous of me (laughs) in retrospect, but she did let me know.

B: But that was an issue!

P: Ya it was, it was an issue for me then. And I would have to say in honesty, um, in all honesty that probably my greatest reason for choosing to attend here, um, probably had to do with tuition. Um, because BC was and still is very expensive and they were not real forthcoming with financial

aid at that point in time. North Eastern was also somewhat less expensive, but still on the expensive side. And they offered me... they did offer me a grant of some sort, not huge that I recall. And I think, again in retrospect, hind-sight... If you could live your life you know, that way, hind-sight is always 20/20. And this is again something I will probably want to edit later, but if I knew then what I know today I probably would have gone with my first choice, which was BC and I'm sure you know, would have managed to scrape things through and manage to get through, but I don't regret (B: okay) you know, the choice to come here either.

B: When you say in hind-sight, can you explain that a little bit?

P: Well my motivation actually, I suppose, in choosing Lowell State at that point over BC, was the fact that the tuition...this was a State College, the tuition I think at that point was \$200.00 a year, or something of that nature. Um, don't hold me to that one, but it was in that ball park. It was down right cheap kind of thing um, at least when I started. And I forget what BC was, but let's suffice it to say, multiple of that. You know, multiples of two hundred a year. And as I've already said, I was the oldest of six kids in a very traditional family. It was very much understood that I was going to have to come up with some part of my tuition and expenses. And it seemed more reasonable and more practical to go with what was more easily affordable. Again though, if I had known... You live and you learn your way around different situations kind of thing, um, I think BC could have been done. It could have been achieved you know, it could have been achieved if I'd really wanted it. I don't feel that I lacked for anything at this point though. You know, that I lacked for anything. It's not a decision that I regret in any way, shape or form. I just remember dealing with the issue at the time you know, as a senior in high school here I've got these acceptances and gee this is the one I really really want, because you know, they've told me it's a really good program and it looks good, and this is where Dad went to school. And on top of that it's further away from home, which was an issue okay, at that age kind of thing. I truly did not want to live at home and commute. Though it became increasingly obvious to me from parental communiques that no matter which place I chose it was going to be live at home and commute. (Both Laugh) So it was um, it was life you know, it was life. And I don't, as I say, regret my choice in Lowell State College at all, or what Lowell State has become. In fact I've become rather proud to say you know, that I graduated from here. So I don't regret it at all. But I remember going through that whole period with these deadlines you know, we have to know by... Oh my God I have to make this decision and really should I.... I remember only becoming in the beginning of my senior year aware that Lowell State College was developing a nursing program and it was open for applications kind of thing. So I remember applying here much later than I applied to either of the other two schools, and this is where I wound up. You know, this is where I decided...

B: Do you remember any of the questions that Dr. Barker asked you during your interview? Or do you remember any... You were very emphatic about what you needed from her, but...

P: That was very odd for me at the time. As I say, I was a shy and retiring type. That took... And in retrospect remembering you know, I would not, was not one to be bold at all kind of thing. Um, that was a very bold statement for me. (Laughs) An extremely bold statement for me! I don't specifically remember any specific question. I remember discussing my SAT scores and you know, my college board scores. My english scores were fine. I remember taking a Biology SAT and that was fine. It was five or six hundred, somewhere in that ballpark. My math scores were just the way my math scores have been throughout my life. You know, they were not wonderful kind of thing. Um, I think I had, I don't know, something outrageous like a 300 some odd in math, or something of that nature. I forget. But I remember she was saying that that was... I was very much worried about that kind of thing, because I was thinking oh gee, nurses have to take pharmacology and they have to compute medication dosages. And I know that it's really important to have some math skills, and I can learn them kind of thing, I really can you know, if people are patient with me. I can make sure I give the right dose to whatever. And I remember her being very not at all, I mean, relaxed about that particular score. Oh yes, she said, that's really not atypical of nurses kind of thing. To be strong in other areas, that very many nurses were not particularly strong in mathematical errors, and that wasn't the score that I should be particularly upset about and what have you.

I mustn't have had very much in the way of I don't know, self confidence at that point in time, because I can remember sitting through this interview with the same college boards scores that I had applied to both BC and North Eastern with and been accepted. I already knew at this point that I was accepted at both those places and still being a nervous wreck about these you know, these things and this whole interview process and what have you. I can remember too, and I probably would not have been astute enough to ask the questions, those questions at this point, but they were questions again put here by dear old Dad um, about gee, what about accreditation you know, for this program and what have you? I just figured gee, if they offered the program for applicants it must be just honky dory kind of thing. No problem, they're very naive, take things at face value, but I remember my father saying to me, be sure you ask about you know, da, da, da, da, kind of thing. And asking those questions and getting the answers and what have you. And going home and reporting on those answers um, you know, to him.

B: Was it accredited at the time that you....?

P: Um, as I recall they had to graduate a class in order to apply for and hopefully receive an accreditation, but she had some form of assurances that you know, we were passing. We were having for lack of a better term again, inspections of some sort, or meeting criteria you know, as we went along and that she did not think that this would be a huge problem and that she you know, foresaw no problems with accreditation, but that official accreditation I remember her saying couldn't be gained until they'd actually graduated a first class. (B: so...) So we were the guinea pigs.

B: You were the guinea pigs, right. So you entered in September of 19...?

P: 68. Yes, I graduated high school in June of 68, had an awful job that summer. Awful, awful job. The worst job I think I have ever had in my life and it had nothing whatsoever to do with nursing at all. You would think I would have tried to be a nursing assistant or something at that point, but it did have one great benefit this job. It was a factory in Lawrence that was called Turtle Bay and they manufactured clothing for some of the bigger department stores. You know, I Magnan and all of those places. Neiman Marcus and what have you. And I worked as a packer. When a store ordered such and such an item, my job was to put it in the cartons, make sure it was packed with the tissue paper and what have you, so that it arrived, that everything was accurate and that it arrived in order kind of thing. Um, the supervisor would come around at 4:00 in the afternoon and just announce, "we're working overtime tonight", kind of thing. And again I was very shy in those days. I said, "umhm, okay how long"? (Laughs) But the marvelous benefit to this job was that you got what they called an employee discount. You could buy clothes at an incredible discount kind of thing. So this was a wonderful job from that point of view for a girl who spent all twelve years of her school life in catholic school uniforms and had no clothes at this point to now go to college. So I thought this was you know... The job was awful, but this particular benefit was marvelous kind of thing. I started school with the best wardrobe. (laughs)

B: That's neat!

P: It was dumb, it was dumb.

B: Was it um,... Did you have any feelings about not going to a catholic school? Did you wonder would things be different in a non-secular situation?

P: I hoped so! (Both laugh) No, no no no. I think um,... I have no complaints you know, about... Really about catholic education. I do remember having thoughts at that point in time that you know, I will never send my children to catholic schools. They're far too strict, na, na, na, na, onward and upward kind of thing. Um, but I really think that my complaints in that direction, or my feelings in that direction were not real strong. I was looking for something different, I was hoping for something different. I had been in a very controlled environment you know, for twelve years with if it weren't my parents looking over my shoulder, then it was my girlfriend's parents, or it was the sisters, or it was the brothers at the boys school you know, across the way kind of thing, Central Catholic. Um, so I remember thinking aha, you know, a little less control. I can be me whoever that is. (Laughs)

B: So Pat, did you kick up your heels and really become free that September in 1968?

P: No, I had my moments kind of thing.

Um, but in comparison... This was a very (turmoiltuous?) time if you'll recall 1968 with Vietnam War and all kinds of wild and wonderful things going on in the world. I would have to say that even in retrospect I would have to classify me as a reasonable individual at that point in time, yet I had my moments. Um, but I wasn't um, I don't know, off the wall again for lack of a better expression. I did enjoy my freedom. I remember my driving thing at that point in life too, was I really had wanted to live away from home. Not that I don't love my parents dearly and I loved them then too, it's just there was a whole independence issue kind of thing at that point in time. I was seventeen years old and I really thought you know, I want to be responsible for myself. I want to take on the world. I want to be out of any kind of controlled environment. I want to do what I want to do, when I want to do it and if I don't want to do it, then I want to don't want to do it. I don't you know, don't do it kind of thing, and be totally responsible for that. And so I can remember I wanted to live in the dorm, or I wanted to get an apartment, or you know, all kinds of you know, those things. And really I suppose in retrospect throughout my years in college I would have to say, yes, I lived at home for at least, for three of my four years in college I did live at home. By living at home I mean that I might have eaten six or seven meals a week there and nine days out of ten, or eight days out of ten I maybe slept there kind of thing. I mean I was as far from parental "control" if you will as you can get and still have the same mailing address. Um I really... I use to envy the kids that lived in the dorm until I got to see what dorm life was like. I know the dorm life was bad, but they had more curfews than I did! They had to be back from wherever they were at such and such a time, and then they had to sign in and sign out, and they had to ask permission for late this or late that, or you know, whatever. I mean all I had to do was say, Mom, I'm going such and such a place and I'll be back about kind of thing. And that was fine as long as they had some idea of where I was and who I was with. And if I'd change my plans I would think to give them a phone call, which is really only courteous. I mean I never had any real problem with that, but again I don't think I realized that very early on. I was somewhere later, at a later date that I realized that hey, you really wound up in a better situation. Um, I remember I was commuting, but um...let me see, I had a car. I had an old, old car that my folks had bought, oh at some point in life, brand new. And I can remember my freshman year my father saying to me...or somewhere, I guess the summer before I started school, my father saying to me, you can have the car if you pay the insurance on it. Um, you know, if you pay the insurance and if you make sure you have your gas and what have you. He says, I don't want to have anything to do with that car. It's yours. You don't have to pay me for it or anything, but it's yours.

The very first week I started school I met this girl. I, as I said, lived in Lawrence at the time and I had not known her before. She was from Haverhill. Um, and we wound up in a class together, or we wound up in several classes together, which was probably why we kind of picked each other out of a crowd. I was the only one when I came here. I was not the only one who came to Lowell State College from where I went to school, um, from where I went to high school, but

I was the only one who came and went into nursing. And at that point in life the nurses kind of were a little segregated from the rest of the world. Um, we had our classes together. You know there was all, almost all, not 100% true, but mostly nurses in this class and mostly nurses in that class. We weren't inter-mixed with the education majors, or the music majors in almost any classes. So that it was a little frightening to come in to a totally new environment. And to me at that point in time too...

TAPE I, SIDE A ENDS

TAPE I, SIDE B BEGINS WITH "B" IN MID-SENTENCE

B: May 3rd and this is side two of tape I. I'm Barbara Bruno and I'm continuing my oral history with Pat Moysenko.

And we'll pick up Pat and you... the last couple of words that you said, there were one or two and I hope you can pick up your train of thought from there.

P: I think I can. Um, what I was thinking was I had come from an environment where we had you know, multiple classrooms, but only one building to deal with. And now I was coming into a situation where we had several. Anyway, it was much larger, much grander scale. And I can remember having anxiety attacks about gee, I don't know anybody in the classes I'm in. I don't know where the buildings are; and I don't know what building's called what; and I don't know what class, where I'm suppose to be and when I'm suppose to be there; and oh boy am I ever going to handle this? I can remember coming up the very first day and riding... Um, coming up with some friends who were also coming here, but they were mostly education majors. And the very first day they had kind of an orientation for all freshmen in what... the little theater. And I was very glad that we could all be together, you know, that I could stay with my friends that particular morning. And being very very scared I suppose is probably the best word to describe it, when we finally had to split up and I had to go find out where nursing majors was suppose to be kind of thing, because I knew not one of them. But I think what started my whole story was that yes, I did have a car that my parents had given me for transport back and forth. And I met this girl in my classes who was very friendly and her name was Irene. Um, and I don't know what it was, she needed a ride at some point. Somehow this was like very first couple of weeks of school kind of thing. And she lived in Haverhill, I lived in Lawrence, I mean they're spitting distance apart kind of thing. And it was no big deal to me. I said, sure, I'll drive you home, or I'll pick you up, or whatever the situation was. And I was getting to know her, we'd had a couple of classes together. But I do remember it was the very first beginning of school kind of thing, because we had just bought all of these brand new, very expensive books kind of thing.

Um, and Irene at this point was actually a little older than your average freshmen. She's a couple of years older than I and had a better idea of the value of a dollar than I did at that point in life.

She was married and self supporting and what have you. Um, and this was coming out of her pocket, not out of a combination of hers and Dad's and what have you kind of thing. But I can remember going out to this car that my father had given me at this point, and we got into it. And I tried to start it and it wouldn't start, and it wouldn't start and it wouldn't start. And it was like well, okay. My grandmother at that point in life only lived you know, a mile from here, down the road kind of thing, so it was a very secure... Really it was a new environment for me in terms of going to college, but it was a really very secure situation. You know there's no, no biggies kind of thing. So I hoofed it. I said, you keep trying the car, I said to my friend and I hoofed it over to Gram's house. And I called my father and he said, alright, where is it? Um, and I told him we were parked over on Wilder Street over here. And I said, you know, it's between Middlesex and Broadway and it's on Wilder. And he was, I mean we lived here for years. He was extremely familiar with the area. He says, alright, I'll be there in a few minutes, I'll see what we can do. And I hoofed it back. And as I came around the corner to Wilder Street kind of thing, I saw this kind of commotion down the street, which at first I thought, gee, that's interesting. I wonder what's going on? And then I realized that there was a fire truck and there was all kinds of stuff. Well poor Irene had tried to start this car and it had exploded! It's essentially what happened. I don't know mechanically what happened to it, but it exploded on her! And there's smoke coming up from under the hood. (B: laughing) Well her first thought, thought one was get out of the car. Thought two was get these expensive books out of the back seat and dump them on somebody's lawn. And then she um, she went up to a telephone lineman and it was, excuse me sir, I'm having trouble with my car. By this time there's smoke pouring out everywhere and he said to her, I can see that. (Both laughing) So they called the fire department. And by the time my father got there, he was looking for a little brown car and two girls, he found a grey ash and a fire truck and two girls. (Laughing) That car never ran again! (Both laughing) But it's made a wonderful story. Irene and I are going to sit in a nursing home in our rocking chairs and tell our great grandchildren this particular story. This was the beginning of our relationship, which got very strong you know, all through college and lasted several years after college. And I would still have to say it's not as close, because we are physically distant and working in different areas and what have you, but still exists. I mean, we can pick up the telephone and we can go, we can go... honest to God it's an awful thing to say, we've been two years at different times without conversing. And then all of a sudden one of us will pick up the phone and it's you know, we can pick up a relationship, or it seems to be we can pick it up right where we left off kind of thing.

B: So you said that nursing classes, the nursing students had their own classes. (P: umhm) So was Weed Hall built at that point in time?

P: Um, the Weed Hall did not exist at that point in life. We had...

B: Did not. So where did you have your major classes?

P: Our classes seemed to be scattered throughout the old old building. Was it Coburn Hall is it, I think? Um, the building with the little theater. That's Mahoney I think. And then the building that's up on the hill, whose name I can't... (B: Dugan) Thank You. Thank God, I can remember again, this dates back to the fact that I actually lived in this area as a kid. There was an old men's rest home up on that hill that was called the Battle's Home for years and years, so that's what I tend to call it. I'm getting old. (B: laughs) You know, the one where the Battle's Home use to be I'd say to my mother. And she'd say ya, I know where that was, okay!

Um, but there was those three buildings. And the nursing department, the offices for the nursing department, if you could call it a department at that point, um, were in... on Wilder Street in an old white house. (B: really?) A wood frame house. It had been someone's home, um, on Wilder Street.

B: So that's the little house, the white house, the white framed house (P: ya) was where you went for your initial interview right?

P: Yes, that I believe... um,... no. No, that wasn't where I went for my initial interview. I somehow went for my initial interview someplace down by where the dorms use to be. Dr. Barker was the person who did the interviewing and she had an office down there somewhere and I would be hard put to tell you at this point in life.

B: Did you have any classes with other majors like english? Your sciences probably were all nursing students?

P: The sciences were all nursing. Um, we had a statistics course that was just awful, only from my math point of view, only because of my weak math skills. The course was probably just wonderful. I perceived it as being just awful. It was the worst thing, worst thing at that point in life, or at that particular semester was the statistics course. And that was us, that was all nurses kind of thing, because I think it was specifically set up for nurses.

Um, it seems to me that there were some psyche courses. There was an english course, we did have to take an english course someplace in there and there may well have been some other people in there other than nurses. I get you know,... we're talking ancient history, do you understand? (Both laugh) But I just seemed to um... I remember my perception of the four years was that we were more segregated than other majors had been. And some of that was because I think we, as time went on spent so much time off campus in clinical areas, in different places too. So I always had the feeling that I never knew what was going on here you know, on the campus kind of thing.

B: What was your first nursing course?

P: Oh, it was a history of nursing course. And the next question is, who taught it? (Whispers: I can't remember) I can't remember!

B: That's okay. Do you remember anything about it?

P: Ya, I loved it!

B: Did you really?

P: I thought it was great, but I like history.

B: Oh do you?

P: Okay, I like historical kinds of things. Um, and I remember this was my first nursing course, so I was super excited about it anyway kind of thing. This is really the first course in my major. I mean, I had english in high school and I had math in high school, and really in some cases it was ya, college level, but one of the things I will say real positive about parochial education is they are verystrong on english and history and language kinds of things. So I really didn't really feel that was anything new to me kind of thing.

Um, but the History of Nursing, this was my first nursing course and ya, from an historical perspective and I like history, so I was really excited about taking it. Can't tell you what I did in it, how I did in it kind of thing. Probably okay. Um, I can't remember who taught it, isn't that awful!

B: No, I don't think that's awful at all!

P: Perhaps Dr. Barker. It's quite possible it was her, because the nursing department, now we're talking 68, (B: right) was a one man show for awhile. There was her, that was it for awhile.

B: Wow! That's interesting to think about.

P: And then I can remember gradually people being added. As our class progressed and needed such and such... You know we got into and we needed a med-surge course, then it seemed to me that med-surge people appeared. I'm sure they didn't appear, but from my perspective they appeared kind of thing. I'm quite sure she was working very diligently to um, you know, get people on board and plan for things and what have you. Um, but it just... I can remember it just growing and growing and growing! And to me I still perceive it as growing and growing. I mean, it's... compared to this one man show that was Dr. Barker when we first started here um, and when I first came for an interview, when there were I don't know, maybe fifty of us, or sixty of us that were in the nursing program, I mean to me it has just mushroomed. I mean it's just really taken off. They give a graduated program and everything at this point.

B: Can you remember your first nursing instructor, or your first nursing course that you have a real memory of?

P: Um, I remember the instructor. Um, well actually let me back up a little bit, (B: Sure) okay? (B: Yes)

P: Um, because there were a couple of other things that maybe don't have a lot, well they tie in with Lowell State at that point in time. I can remember the summer um, towards the end of my freshman year, um, for, I have no idea how it came about, I just remember hearing about it. You know you don't remember details sometimes. But I can remember we had no clinical experience at all, freshman year. That was all a liberal arts kind of thing. And I do think we had the history of nursing freshman year. Don't hold me to that one. I mean you could probably check records and find out it was sophomore year, but it might have been freshman year. And our first clinical experience and real nursing, nursing kinds of courses were due to come about in sophomore year. And that had since changed also, but for us it happened in sophomore year. Um, but somehow, some way um, St. Joseph's hospital here in Lowell apparently was looking for people to work as nursing assistants in the summer and after school and you know, all of that jazz. And somehow that came to my awareness um, and I needed a job.

So I can remember, and there were a bunch of us that went over and applied for these nursing assistant positions. And there were a bunch of us that went through this "Nursing Assistant Training Program." So this was really my first clinical experience. It was not here, it was there kind of thing. Um, I can even remember my instructor um, because I now hold her position and she just retired six months, six or eight months ago.

B: Oh, that's amazing!

P: Um, so she's been someone I've pretty much kind of known all my life at this point, all of my nursing life. She was a Mass General Grad and a former Navy nurse and what have you. And she taught, I think we had I don't know, a two or a three week training program, something of that nature. And they taught us to do bed baths; and bath care; and skin care; and vital signs; and empty constant drainage bags; and you know, those kind of tasky things. Um, and I remember thinking, this is really wonderful! This is what I want! You know, all the skill oriented kinds of stuff that you know, (B: That must have been exciting!) came down to play. It was, it was a riot and a half. And I remember they didn't teach us to take blood pressures, just to take TPR's. And having a little trouble picking up the whole idea of taking pulses kind of thing. That was my big, my big worry as I... Oh my God is that accurate, am I doing it right, you know, kind of thing. That seemed to be the one I had most trouble with. I did eventually learn.

But I worked that summer. I took that course in the beginning of the summer and I worked all that summer at St. Joseph's Hospital. And then I did a little part time um, when I came back to school. I'd do some weekends and holidays and evenings, or whatever I could fit in to make a little money kind of thing, which was helping to fray the cost of tuitions and books and uniforms and all of that jazz too.

B: What were your uniforms like Pat? I didn't even think of that!

P: Um, much the same as they are today. Much much the same as they are today. We designed them. Um, we had alot of input into the design of the uniform and the cap. Um, I don't, I regret the cap. (Both laugh)

B: Even though you regret it, tell me a little bit about it.

P: I do remember Dr. Barker asking us um, I don't remember doing drawings, or... but coming to us with designs and pictures and you know, all kinds of stuff and asking for input into the design of the uniform and the cap. We didn't want to look studentee kind of thing. And we particularly did not want to look um, diploma school studentee kind of thing. We did not want these colored uniforms with the black stockings and different you know, we wanted to look collegiate level nursing kind of thing. We didn't know what that was, but we wanted to look the part kind of thing. It was awful. It was awful, awful. (B: laughing)

So we had a white uniform that was kind of princess style if you will, not real fitted. So it was reasonably flattering for everybody. And it had a side zipper, you know, up the side with navy blue piping around... we had three quarter sleeves with navy blue piping around the sleeve, with the navy blue piping around the collar, navy blue piping down here, and the cap, which looked somewhat like a dead bird. (Both laughing) I'm sorry.

B: Did you think it looked like a dead bird when you were a student?

P: Um, I don't remember initially if I did, because initially I was like really gun ho about the whole thing. I do remember as time wore on, um, that my instructors did have difficulty getting me to keep my cap on kind of thing. (B: oh!) I mean um, and they... And when my first positions, of course nurses wore caps without fail in those days, I was the renegade who didn't wear the cap kind of thing. I now am very happy to say I'm probably more with the majority who don't wear the cap. (Both laugh) I don't own a cap, haven't for years.

B: I can't wait to see this dead bird of a nursing cap on (sounds like Eleanor).

P: It's the same one they've got now! (Both laughing)

B: I definitely will look that up, but that's interesting that um, Dr. Barker supported that input (P: umhm) from the students to begin forming an image of the Lowell State graduate (few words unclear).

P: I'm not sure whether, I'm very sure that she supported it, I'm not sure that the initial kernal of it didn't come from her. (B: Ya) Um, you know, as she wanted us to be you know, the collegiate program that was in the area you know, kind of thing, and really looked up to, and....

B: Your clinical experience were, did you go to sites where there were also diploma training schools? (P: yes) You did?

P: Yup. In this area, when I first came here, now I know it's grown incredibly since then, but the only clinical areas that we were affiliated with at that point in time were the three hospitals in the city, St. Joseph's, St. John's and Lowell General. And I did at some point in time clinical rotations in all three.

St. Joseph's closed their own school of nursing in 69, so they didn't perceive us, 69 or 70 somewhere early on anyway. They, I don't remember having difficulty there, but at that point in time you have to remember too that I was also an employee there and maintained you know, um, as I was going along. Except for one brief period when I worked in a nursing home for more money believe it or not.

B: That is hard to believe. What year was that?

P: Um, let me see. We started here in 68. I probably started at St. Joe's in 69. It might have been 70? In that ball park. Very brief stint, few months. Um and then the nursing assistant's at St. Joseph's got a raise. And I remember going back there and saying, hi there, remember me kind of thing, and would you take me back? I was surprised, they were glad to take me back kind of thing. Um, but they had gotten a raise and were making significantly more money. I'd also become rather disenchanted with this particular nursing home, um, because I had found out, not that I was allergic to hard work, that wasn't the problem, but I would go in, at the time I didn't realize how dangerous this was. Um, the nurses would say to me, oh gee, you're on your way down to such and such a patient, would you take this medication and give it to her, and would you do this and um, onward and upward. And I was beginning to become aware that this was not something as a student I should be doing unsupervised, and that there was some danger to this. And I was beginning to feel somewhat precarious. I mean, they would call me and want me to come in and work a night shift and I would be it. I mean there might be a nurse in the building somewhere kind of thing, um, but I would be kind of it. So I was beginning to have some misgivings with that position also.

B: So that St. Joseph's (P: umhm) did not put you in that position then as a nursing assistant while you were working through school?

P: No. I functioned as a nursing assistant and we had limitations. I will say, and this is probably a two edge sword that you know, you work weekends, life is a little short on the weekends kind of thing. And that as I went through and my education of course, I was learning more in school than what they normally would allow a nursing assistant to do. And there were head nurses and charge nurses who would say for instance, at that point nursing assistants there were not allowed to say, take blood pressures. And there were nurses who would say to me, you can take a blood pressure as well as I can, please go do it, you know. I will be responsible if anybody has anything to say about it kind of thing. They would check me off themselves. They would

check and make sure that I knew what I was doing. So I did do some little things that were not within maybe the realm of their job description at that point as a nursing assistant, but not um, being asked to stay on a floor by myself, or giving any medication, or whatever. They were....

B: They were more complicated tasks that you were concerned to do.

P: Right, but there were things too that I was feeling very comfortable with at that point, because I was having clinical experience doing them elsewhere too. So it wasn't something I was uncomfortable doing.

B: Did Lowell General have a three year diploma school at the same time?

P: Yes. Lowell General did have a three year diploma school at the same time. And it's an interesting question that you raise, about were there any in the area. Um, I can remember doing an obstetrical experience at Lowell General um, labor and delivery, and postpartum and nursery. And I can't remember if I was there for any other types of experiences at this point. Um, but they had a very active three year diploma school at this point. And I can remember feeling, what's a good way to describe the way we felt? Um, neglected, um, definite antipathy. Um, not so much verbal, very non verbal kinds of things, you know. Um, they, you would over hear conversations between the staff, "our students can do that." "What do you mean, you're a junior and you can't do?" Tera, tera, kind of thing. More reading between the lines than you know, anything else.

Um, I can remember one particular area, I think it was labor and delivery, would allow us to do nothing, absolutely nothing, except that our instructor had to be immediately with us. You know the nurses in that area would not supervise us doing anything they, it came across very very strongly that they did really not want us there kind of thing.

B: How did you work with those feelings? Did you as students get together and verbalize (few words unclear)?

P: Ya, we use to talk about it among ourselves. I'm not, I can't recall that we talked about it with the faculty. We probably did, because things were not real closed um, at that point, but I do remember groups of us um, talking about it among ourselves, you know, muttering on the way out, or we'd go to the Walbrook for whatever kind of thing.

B: You'll have to explain the Walbrook to me?

P: Okay. The Walbrook was a little restaurant. And the restaurant still exists, but it's no longer called the Walbrook in Dracut. And they were a pizza and sandwich kind of place and beer if you could get it, if you could prove you were twenty-one at that point in time. I usually couldn't. (Both laugh) (B: Okay) Um, but we'd go over there and we'd be talking about gee, this happened to me and such and such, um, and you know, gee, this happened here. And boy did you hear, dada, dada. And essentially it was kind of a support group kind

of thing. We would provide support for one another.

B: Was Irene with you at that point in time?

P: Um, we did much of our schooling together, much of our education together. I can't remember, we sometimes wound up in different clinical groups, um, or we would be taking maybe the same class, but at different times on occasion. So we weren't 100% together, but there were other people. Um, there were four of us actually I can remember being a bit of a group as we went through. There was Irene, there was a girl who lived here in Lowell whose name was Doris, um myself, and I was living in Lawrence at that point in life, and then another girl named Bobbie who lived in Haverhill kind of thing. And we were kind of a group kind of thing. Granted we were probably close friends among (B: the larger) the larger perspective kind of thing, the larger network of things.

Um, and there were other people I mean, that were in and out. Um, there were some of those people um, who also worked with me at St. Joseph's. And then there were others I got to know who were in the same nursing program as I, but got to know because they were also working at St. Joseph's. You know, there were all kinds of inter-relationships. There was even a little bond over there you know, of people who were in the same class here kind of thing.

B: Do you remember the size of your clinical group and do you remember your instructor at Lawrence General?

P: Not Lawrence General, it was Lowell General. (B: excuse me) Ya. (B: Thank you) Ya, that was an OB experience and I think that came along somewhere in around junior year. So we're talking about, let me see 68, 69, 69 and 70, 70 and 71, so we're talking about that area, the 70, 71 area. And the topic was OB. Um, the instructors, we had several. Now let me think and see if I can remember everybody. I may not remember everybody. Um, one was a nurse who was herself pregnant at the time. I remember thinking it's a riot, she's teaching OB, her name was Claudette (Rigo), um, and she's still in the Lowell area, um, remarried. Her name is now Claudette Maria. I see her occasionally. Um, she, I think had taught OB someplace before and I'm trying to remember where and it's not coming back to me. Locally anyway. Um, she did I think, most of the OB lectures and she did alot of the clinical supervision in that area. Seems to me she did um, all of our labor and delivery and a good bit of postpartum. My perceptions maybe somewhat, you know, again from a student's perspective, and maybe tempered by time, somewhat inaccurate. Seems to me that in the postpartum area, not that she neglected us, I don't want to you know, inpart that, but that there wasn't as much supervision you know, in that particular clinical area, because we'd already done some med-surge kinds of things too and postpartum is postpartum kind of thing.

Um, the one thing I do remember and I don't know if she remembers this, I'm sure, probably she does remember this, um, that it was Pat Tyra whose real focus is psyche, who was our nursery instructor, who was our clinical instructor in the nursery.

B: That's incredible!

P: I think it's a riot! And at the time I don't think I realized just how incredible that was. (laughs)

B: Ah, a little group interaction with um, (P: with babies, yes) (word unclear). (Both laughing)

P: But she, I must say that she was very good about it. Um, I don't remember her, if she had a complaint about it, I don't know what her other background is other than psyche. I perceive her as being a real strong psyche kind of person, but at that point in time maybe she'd done you know, other things. I don't really recall. Um, but I don't remember any real thing, anything about it coming across to us really from her. It's just in retrospect that I think, oh my God! I mean it would be like sending me to Pedi at this point in life. All would be lost, you know! (laughs) I don't do kids! (Both laughing) But she did, ya, she did a wonderful job with it kind of thing. I mean um, I really think of the whole OB experience, probably the nursery experience was one of the more positive kinds of things um, for me. Labor and delivery I didn't perceive as being positive. Not so much from the instructors fault, but again there was all kinds of feedback from the staff that was there, that you really had this perception they didn't want us kind of thing.

B: What types of nursing measures were going on in labor and delivery? Was that the age when there was a strong force for natural child birth with fathers in the delivery room?

P: No. We're talking before, long before that time. I mean really, honest to Pete. Um, I don't mean to be critical of the physical facility, I'm sure it was typical of its time, but the labor room was just that, a large room with beds if you could call them that. They were really something between a stretcher and a bed, um, really. And what you had for privacy in a labor area was simply to draw the curtain between two laboring patients. So that you could have x number of people in labor and in variety of stages of labor. Um, the big thing at the time was not the natural child birth with the relaxation and the breathing techniques and what have you, um, but was whatever turns you on! Medicate them, you know, (Scapolomine?) was a biggie at that point in life.

I remember um, coping. You know, clinically I did what you had to clinically and what was relevant at the time, but I remember in terms of my own personal perspective, in that someday I will get married and I will have children and being frightened to death that this was not going to happen to me. This was, there has to be another way! (laughs)

B: Have you since had children?

P: Oh ya, I have a little girl whose not so little anymore, she's twelve. And life was different when I had her. Um, my husband went

through what was called at that point strictly (Lamarze) classes, which went through a review of the whole process of labor and delivery and talked about breathing and relaxation and techniques. And she was born in seventy-five, and even then, at least in this area um, husbands were not, they, I think the word I would use to describe how they were viewed in a labor and delivery area was tolerated kind of thing. Um, they were tolerated. They had to go to class and you had to have some sort of certificate that said you passed it, you know, you've completed it kind of thing, or you were enrolled. Um, and I can remember it, even him bringing me in 75 to the hospital and being hung up in the admitting office and him getting very, and Andy can be very, he can be down right aggressive when he chooses to be on occasion. Um, that his wife was up there, he had been to his classes, he'd fulfilled the obligations and unless they got their act together, he was just walking out the door and up the stairs kind of thing. But he felt like this was the way he was being treated. Um, that he had to be this adamant about things. He was going, kind of thing.

B: Was there a great emphasis on a postpartum unit to do teaching with mothers?

P: Ya! As a matter of fact, I chose at that point in time, you mean in my clinical experience?

B: Yes, in your clinical experience (few words unclear).

P: Yes, there was. In fact I can remember, this is an awful thing to say, (both laughing) being told that I should go in and teach this woman about breast feeding her baby. And I was at a complete loss, because I felt like, what do I know about breast feeding that she doesn't know? I mean, I haven't done this! I haven't seen it done! I haven't you know, how does one go about doing this kind of thing. I remember being very um, up in the air about doing that. But there were ah, another thing that we did was baby bath demonstrations and bottle feeding. I felt really very strong in that area. Probably from the point of view that yes, we've been taught to do that, but also you have to remember again, I was the oldest of six kids, I had done alot of that kind of thing. So I felt very comfortable with that, but I can remember this one particular day I was suppose to go teach this mother about breast feeding. And I was at, I mean ya, I knew the whole, the principle behind it, but from a practical point of view, (makes funny sounds) I know nothing! I mean, (laughs) that's like sending the blind to lead the blind. (Both laughing) But I felt like oh God, I've gotta find something about this wicked quick before I... (still laughing)

B: Did you find that there were resources available for the students on your um, in your clinical site areas that you could refer to (P: ya) to help you with that situation?

P: Ya, ya, mostly they were. Um, I will say, and again um, I probably should stipulate on the consent (words unclear) maybe we shouldn't release this to Lowell General, but I found that that particular rotation, because of some of the attitudes that were coming across to us, I was probably feeling the most inhibited about asking for help or direction, or assistance, or anything of that nature. Um, I don't remember feeling that in the other areas, um, you know, like in med-surge, or anything in that nature, when we went to different places for that.

B: What about your med-surge experience and your psychiatric experience?

P: Um, let me see. Med-surge, I remember um, the first instructor I came across, or actually two people. And I can't, I think one came before the other, but again, memory and time sometimes. Um, Marie Kelleher was one of the first people I remember in connection with med-surge and she was wonderful. She was wonderful as an...

TAPE I, SIDE B ENDS

TAPE II, SIDE A BEGINS WITH "B" IN MID SENTENCE

B: This is tape number two. It's May 3rd, 1988. I'm Barbara Bruno and I'm with Pat (P: Moysenko) Moysenko and we're on side I of tape II. And Pat had begun telling us about her med-surge experience with I think it's Marie Kelleher, (P: umhm, yup) and how much of a lady she was.

P: Oh she was! She was a BC Grad and she was every inter-lady, but she was taking nothing from no one, if you will, kind of thing. Um, I can remember being in a clinical area with her and this local physician who shall not remain nameless, (both laughing) we get along very well at this point in life, but um, again you have to remember that we were new in the area and the program, not just us, the whole program, the whole concept of a Baccalaureate nurse was new in this area. And I can remember this particular physician, his name is Dr. Harrison, coming up to Miss Kelleher while we were in the nurses station. And we were at St. John's Hospital when I happened to be with her at this point in life. I just happened to be the student on the spot if you will. And this physician wanting to, saying to me, "where are you from?" "You're a student, where are you from?" I told him where I was from and he said, "Oh, I didn't know they had a nursing school. Now what kind of program is this?" And I told him that it was you know, a Bachelors level program. And he looked at me and he said, "Oh, paperwork nurse". Well before I could even formulate a response this woman who was every inch a lady stepped in. And she was very, extremely polite, but she was very firm, um, saying to him um, "that no, this was not going to be a paper work nurse." "That yes, there was a certain element of paper work in any profession, or any way you turn to deal with a profession". And then she turned to me and said, "would you please explain to Dr. Harrison what we

just gotten through doing, what procedures we had just gotten through doing?" And I had just gotten through giving an enema of all things, kind of things. So ya, I went into detail. I have to laugh about it since then, because I went on... Dr. Harrison is an orthopedic surgeon and I went on in this community to become a Head Nurse in an orthopedic unit. And we get along famously and have gotten along famously for years, but this was my intro to dealing with physicians shall we say. (laughing)

B: Well it's good that you had such an assertive role model.

P: Yes she was!

B: Not going to sit back and let a comment go by. That there was a value to Baccalaureate.

P: Umhm, education.

B: (Few words unclear)

P: And not only was there a value, I mean I knew what the value was I think at this point in life, because I had chosen that. I probably could have spoken on that. But I think um, he was an authority figure, any physician you know, was an authority figure. Um, and the way she dealt with it, um, with the situation. She was exceedingly polite, never rude, anything of that nature, but she got her point across. I mean, he got it, I got it, the whole world got the point kind of thing. (Laughs) Um, but I can remember her um, in the clinical area um, all kinds of you know, extremely consciousness things keep coming to mind. I can remember her teaching us to chart, to document on the patients chart and abbreviations. And I can remember reading notes and coming across the abbreviation again um, SOB was one, was an abbreviation. And I had not the word, you know, most remote idea what that was, well what it was in a medical sense anyway. (Both laughing) And her explaining to me and never eluding, never really eluding to what else it could be, that you and I both know it could be, but with the twinkle in her eye that you know, she knew you knew, you knew she knew kind of thing.

Um, I can remember her being there when you needed her kind of thing, when you were very scared about going into this particular patient, and how are you going to cope with this and how are you going to manage that, um, you know, and doing that kind of thing. She was always very supportive kind of thing.

B: Did she also present the classroom material content on med-surge nursing, or...?

P: She did. She did present classroom material and I don't have real strong recollections of... I do have recollections, but I think what I'm saying is that she and Norma McQuade split med-surge classroom kinds of things. And I remember Norma in particular, in the classroom, only because if you put down your pencil for 3½ seconds, you were lost.

I mean, she had all of this material and she gave it to you rapid fire. She expected you to know it, stop her, ask questions if you didn't and to get it all kind of thing. I mean she was very demanding. And I'd say that to Norma's face! (Laughs) Instructor. Um, you know, very willing to stop and explain anything, but other than that she had material that she had to get in this hour and your job was to get it kind of thing. (Laughs)

B: Did she go to another clinical site with another group of students? (P: Norma?) Yes, Norma.

P: I'm trying to remember. I remember having Marie. She might have. She might well have. Um, I remember having Marie in the clinical area. I also remember having Norma at a later date in the clinical area. I remember her for critical care, or maybe a later med-surge, or maybe an advanced med-surge. I do remember her in ICU, you know, for critical care, again at St. John's. Again, we're talking ancient history. Recollections really do get a little foggy at times.

B: Was pharmacy integrated into (word unclear) med-surge, or did you have an actual pharmacy, pharmacology course where you learned all the classes of drugs?

P: I think we had a pharmacology course. And I think that both Marie and Norma played a large role in teaching that. I remember doing drug calculations and hating them just as much as I hated any other math I had ever been introduced to. I was twenty-five or so before I learned to do any kind of math at all, really. They say that you don't necessarily learn in logical progressions, that sometimes it's kind of ahas or bright lights, well somewhere around the age of twenty-five I had an aha experience and learned to do a few math type of things. (Laughs) But I do remember pharmacology being dull, dry shall we say! But I remember perceiving it as being something I had to know too. I mean, that was a desperate. I have to know the meds my patient's on. It was a real desperate you know, I felt I don't know, very much um, unworthy or whatever um, if I didn't, if I had a patient and they had a med and I didn't know what it was kind of thing. I do remember we had to make these drug cards, that when you had a patient in the clinical area actually you were very often expected to go sometimes the afternoon before, or try to get there before, or ahead of time and find out what meds your patient was on, so that you could look them up and have made your drug card by the time you arrived in the clinical area that day.

Um, different instructors seemed to handle that differently. I remember drug cards as being very pervasive, but different instructors did tend to handle that a little bit differently, cause I can remember doing it in retrospect and handing them in also too. Um, but it was very pervasive. And I remember holding on to my drug cards as a new grad. I had a file box on my unit and I would know pretty much what I had a card on. So if I ran across a drug and

I couldn't remember you know, specifics, I'd go to my little box before I'd go to the PDR and see, do I have a card on this, kind of thing. And I really did find that very helpful. In fact I have used that technique that was used on me, on students. Um, I shouldn't call them students, when I see them they're grads, but people who might be weak in a given area kind of thing, I've used that particular technique with them and used it pretty successfully myself.

B: So some of the techniques from your own training have followed you right along?

P: Ya, sometimes some of them have!

B: Um, pediatrics?

P: We did pedi at St. John's. Um, at least my group did. I think we all did pedi at St. John's. Um, St. John's at that point in life, um, had two pedi units and I can't again remember what year we're talking about, whether that was a junior, or a senior year kind of thing. It's moosh in the brain. Um, but they had an adolescent pedi unit and they had a younger child pedi unit, and we each spent some time in both areas. Um, pedi I remember as being real positive, real negative kinds of things. Um, all kinds of crazy things happened during pedi. It seemed to me more crazy than usual. I remember more specifics than usual.

I do remember my very first day in pedi, at St. John's, in the little kid, the younger pedi kind of thing, having a negative type of experience with a particular physician. Um, it was my very first day on the unit, I wasn't too sure which end of the idea was up. And he was trying to do a procedure, draw blood from a kid I think, a little, a mini kid, a little kid, an infant, and screaming at me because I didn't know where such and such was. I mean there was an R.N. assisting him, and I was like the gopher. (B: The assistant to the assistant) Ya, you got it, the assistant to the assistant kind of thing. Um, but oh, I remember walking away in tears thinking, um, I hadn't yet developed a thick skin in life um, but being very very upset about that.

Um, I can remember um, the adolescent pedi I enjoyed better. Um, God only knows why, because I don't necessarily enjoy adolescence better now! (Laughs)

B: That twelve year old is getting right into the thick of it.

P: You got it! You got it! Um, but I can remember having, a couple of experiences I remember having. I remember having this one particular little fellow who was probably just about twelve at the time, to my maybe 19 or 20 at the time. And I can't remember his name, but he had broken his pelvis in a sledding accident here in Shedd Park in Lowell, and I think the reason I remember him, was because at this point somewhere in this area I had developed something of an interest in orthopedics, um, number one, was one reason why I remember him. Number two was he developed a crush on me kind of

thing. And I was there for a couple of days and of course he was there with his fractured pelvis over a fairly prolonged period of time. So I have him as a patient on several different occasions. And if he saw the students and I didn't have him, he'd ask for me. And when he went home he'd write to me for awhile, he did for a little while after that. I remember writing him a couple of letters and sending him a little gifty kind of thing one time. Um, but it died you know, eventually. At this point I can't remember his name. Honest to God, that's awful.

B: Is that what developed your interest do you think, in orthopedics?

P: I'm not sure which came first, you know, the cart or the house. I remember another very positive experience in the adolescent pedi area. Um, I remember one of the things that use to be said about the Baccalaureate student, was that he or she only handles one, or maybe two patients at a time kind of thing. And something happened um, on a clinical day. The instructor had gone and taken X Y and Z patients you know, the evening before and then some student called in sick, or whatever kind of thing. Now I remember I was very proud! of myself, because I had continued to be working as a nursing assistant too. So I had developed some organizational skills um, that maybe some of the other kids who hadn't been doing this didn't have at this point, but I took four patients that day and boy was the staff impressed kind of thing. (Laughs)

B: Oh great! It must have made you feel absolutely wonderful too.

P: See, aha, we can do it kind of thing!

B: It must have been an experience to be the first class breaking into some, I consider just from my short time being here in Lowell, is a very traditional, doesn't change much, community and to have that experience. Did you...was it retrospect that you knew that you were breaking (unclear), or was it (few words unclear)?

P: No, I think we kind of knew it at the time, but you have different levels of awareness if you'll allow me to phrase it that way. I have a different awareness of it now than I had then. Um, somewhat I think maybe more acute now. I mean, I really am kind of proud to say I was with the first class. I'm getting less proud as years go on, because people know when the first class graduated, but um (Both laughing)

B: When you graduated was it still Lowell State College, (P: yes) or had the merger occurred?

P: No. The merger occurred 75 I believe, and I graduated in 72. It was very much in a talking phase though, there was lots of scuttlebutt running around about it. And I remember thinking gee, I don't know if that's good or bad. And I remember even thinking that oh, my goodness, maybe I made a mistake. I mean, the school I graduated from isn't even going to exist anymore, and that nothing could be further than the truth um, you know at this point in time. Um, I definitely do feel you

know, strong ties and strong connections to U Lowell, and I will say, I mean if you ask where I graduated from today, I'll say U Lowell. Um, and then I'll you know, if somebody wants to know any-more about it, I'll go into ya, gee, at that point in time, nana, nana, I would get into historical perspectives, but as I said, I can like history a little bit. (B: ya)

Um, something that you may or may not want to know that I recall, again we were talking a little bit about pedi experiences. And this I think was more than negative and probably one of my more negative experiences here at the school and I really don't know what caused it, um, wasn't any of my business at that point in time, and still isn't really any of my business what precipitated the whole thing, but I can give you a little picture of the episode from the student's perspective.

There apparently was some difficulty, which I've not the foggiest notion what it was, with my pedi instructor.

B: From what perspective? From a hospital's perspective, or from the school?

P: From the university, from the school's perspective. Um, to the extent where apparently she was terminated. Um, and I guess, I don't know the ins and outs. My perspective was, I remember showing up in the clinical area on pedi, the whole group of us, however many there were, ten of us, or whatever, you know, scheduled to meet her in the conference room at X period of time to get our assignments and go do our thing and you know, what have you. And we waited, and we waited, and we waited and she never showed up kind of thing.

So some brave soul, I don't know, I kept trying to remember specifics, which happened first. Whether we called her or the school. We might have called her at home first, um, just thinking maybe she'd over slept or something, kind of thing. And whatever happened, we found out that she had been terminated. So here we were sitting in this conference room, suppose to be doing a clinical experience, getting all fired up, because we liked this instructor too, kind of thing. (B: Oh!) And I can remember um, I'm trying to remember exactly how things went. Whether we called the school, I do remember we came to the school, I mean uniforms, caps, the whole bit kind of thing, all ten of us kind of thing. And I remember we thought that we were being very bold and we might well at this point in our lives be throwing away our degrees, but we were coming here to find out what was going on, you know. Um, and we were told, probably not a good choice of words maybe in Dr. Barker's part, but we were, nobody makes 100% good choices of words either, but she sent us back to the hospital to play, was the word that she used, with the kids!

Now obviously something went array somewhere. I don't know what. I don't know where, you know, that never was made real clear to us. There were lots of scuttlebutt, you know, that went around kind of thing, but I can remember we were furious! We weren't there to play with children, we were there to learn to take care of sick children. And we were furious! We did wind up going back to the hospital. I can remember Norma McQuade who was in the building with a different group of students doing med-surge or critical care, coming to help get us in the right place at thr right time, re-oriented, re-focused, whatever, you know, whatever is a good word for that. (B: Ya) I

I remember the termination for the instructor () and I can't remember who they came up with for a pedi instructor. I remember we did finish the rest of the term without a glitch, without any real problem, but that day I mean, obviously some of the details are gone kind of thing. And it's the type of situation, the more I think about it... Some of the things we talked about today, it's the type of situation gee, it makes you want to do kind of a reunion thing and sit down and talk to other people. And gee, cause sometimes you'll remember this detail and they'll remember that kind of thing.

But um, I can remember even several of us going to this instructor's apartment and visiting her afterwards, because we felt for whatever reason that she had been wronged, or at least was not completely...

B: So was that a mission that really remained unsettled right through your graduation?

P: I would say unsettled, but not predominant, if you know what I mean.

B: Yes. That finally when you moved out of pedi it sort of (P: died) it's natural death.

P: It's natural death, you know? You know to this date in time I have no idea really what happened. There was lots and lots of scuttlebutt about gee, this happened and you know, one story was more horrendous than the next you know, but you never knew what to believe.

B: Were they centered around clinical issues, or were they centered around credentialing issues?

P: I don't know. The scuttlebutt, and this is pure scuttlebutt, um, was that there was some sort of extreme difference of opinion between this particular instructor and Dr. Barker, you know, whatever, I really don't know.

B: It was a professional difference.

P: Ya. Whatever it was, I've not the foggiest notion. And it's none of my business then, and none of my business now kind of thing. But I do remember this one particular day. Our thing was that we were not there to play with children (laughs) (B: that's right). It was a stitch, it was a stitch, honest to Pete. (B: Ya) Could we get on our little high horse when we chose to? (Laughs)

B: It does pull a class together when there is a um, happening like that. (P: umhm) When something out of the ordinary occurs then you really do pull together, and you did just that.

P: Ya, it was a very interesting um...

B: I think Dr. Barker was fortunate that she had a senior instructor also situated in the hospital.

P: It seems that, ya. I do remember Norma coming down and kind of refocusing the group and smoothing things over and getting us back to where we should be and providing probably some sort of clinical supervision for at least that day anyway, which must have been very taxing to her to have a group in pedi and a group up here too, kind of thing in retrospect. But we weren't looking at it from her point of view that day I remember. Again, hind sight is 20/20 with a little maturity added for spice kind of thing. (Laughs)

B: And your psychiatric nursing was?

P: It was Pat Tyra again. (B: It was?) A repeat.

B: So she came out of the nursing...?

P: She evolved, I mean things evolved as I say. And I'm trying to...

B: Was Dr. Shalhoup on board?

P: Public Health.

B: Aha!

P: There was she and a woman whose name I cannot remember. Very nice um, I can describe her, heavy set lady, Black, dark hair, I can't remember her name. That's an awful thing. I mean really it's awful to think of it, I can picture her.

B: Yes, it seems as though you have a very clear picture in your mind about her.

P: Ya, but they um, were involved in community and public health, um, which we did most, most with the Lowell VNA, um, through the Lowell VNA. Um, but yeh, Pat Tyra did our psyche, um, with our psyche kind of thing. And she had students in both um, we did, most of it was at, in fact all of it I think was at Solomon Mental Health here in the city. And they have both... (B: (unclear) go ahead).

B: I was going to ask if it was inpatient as well as outpatient.

P: Well yes, they have both an inpatient as well as an outpatient unit. And as I recall, what happened was that she somehow split the clinical groups. So that you might have had an outpatient (pauses)... Some of us were, I don't recall that all of us went through the inpatient area is what I'm saying, but that again might be falacy. Um, I remember being in the inpatient area and thinking to myself, this is not the first place, this is not the place I want to be kind of thing. I'd rather be in the outpatient area kind of thing, for some reason, um, I can't remember why. Um, but I do remember being in the inpatient area. And I remember going, arriving for a group, some sort of group therapy session that was going on and I arrived before the leader of the session, whom ever he or she was, um, and with some of the patients kind of thing. And I was dressed, at this point we didn't

to that, because you see, somewhere along the line I've neglected to mention this fellow that I met in high school kind of thing, I met as a junior in high school, in Lawrence. And we continued to see each other, and I suppose that's a euphemism for lots of things, um, very seriously really, um, through college. He went to school in Cambridge, I was going to school here, so that ya, we had some distance, not outrageous distance, um, but some distance separating us. He was originally from Haverhill, I grew up in Lawrence kind of thing. And somewhere um, I shouldn't say somewhere, I can be very specific about this one. August 21, 1971, which was the summer between my junior and senior year, we got married kind of thing. And he was at that point, I...this was the summer between his junior and senior year in college also. He was down at MIT, I was here kind of thing.

So we had to find someplace to live, was the name of the game kind of thing. And we looked into housing down there. We knew one of us was going to have to commute. And I remember there being issues too. Some of them um, not necessarily expressed directly to us, but that would come back to me in particular. Um, that people didn't think that this was a wonderful idea for us to be doing. It's not that they questioned that we weren't right for each other, or whatever kind of thing, but we really should wait until we finish school. And the money was on the fact that I was not going to finish you know, if people were taking bets, and not that they were, but there was talk in families. I would have to say primarily, some of his family too, um, that gee, you know, this is very nice and what have you, but gee they're very young. And it's really very unlikely, I hope at least one of them finishes school. And the whole idea was that it was very unlikely that it would be me. Not from a personal point of view, but just that I guess at that point in time if some one were going to, in that type of relationship, if it was the guy or the girl that was going to complete, it was usually the guy kind of things. So that lent me a little impetus. There was no way I was gonna drop out, or even defer unless I absolutely had to do something like that. I was finishing and there was no question about that kind of thing.

Um, so from that point of view I had a little renewed motivation. I was also happier I think. I was just happier! You know, we wound up living here in Lowell, because apartments were cheaper here in Lowell than they were in Cambridge kind of thing. So that he did a lot of the commuting back and forth. Um, and often he'd take the bus, sometimes he'd take the car and I would have to fish for a ride. Sometimes he'd take the bus down, and I'd run in to pick him up. He was also doing TA kinds of things um, down there. So that I'd go down while he was doing his TA thing and I'd sit in the corner with my books, you know ah, and do my thing. And you know, life was just easier. I got better grades my senior year um, with the exception of maybe one course. And there was a reason for that, when you don't show up, you don't show up kind of thing. Um, but I got better grades my senior year I think than I did you know, the rest of the time, because I spent half my life running to Cambridge, or you know, back and forth, or up and down kind of thing.

I really think, we use to laugh and say that the time we use to spend running back and forth to see one another, we now could devote to

wear our uniforms, um, we wore street clothes. And we were expected to dress professionally and dada, dada. So I had on one of my suits that I had gotten from this little job that I had you know, years before kind of thing. Um, and as I said, I still had traces of shyness about me. I arrived and I sat down at the table and said nothing, absolutely nothing. And there were several patients you know, who also were there. And I remember thinking to myself, I didn't know quite how to handle the situation, because they were talking about me as if I either a, were not there, or b, were deaf kind of thing.

B: Um, that's interesting.

P: It was an interesting situation. They were trying to decide if I was a patient, is what they were trying to decide. And I can remember, finally one of them said to the other, no, she looks to well put together to be a patient. And I thought to myself, thank God for small favors. (Laughing) And please God, somebody else arrive you know? (Both laughing)

B: Oh! (Unclear) Go ahead.

P: I can remember also having another instance at the time that, I don't know how well known it was. I'm not sure, Pat must have realized it, or maybe she didn't um, I didn't realize it initially and I picked up on it later kind of thing, or I realized it.... I didn't realize it initially, but picked up on it as I was going through the experience, but I was hooked up with this woman who was a patient um, at Solomon. And then the states followed her through her inpatient stay and saw her several times at home later as she was discharged, but she was the mother-in-law of one of my instructors here, which I sometimes felt... The instructor never said a word to me, this particular instructor never said a word to me about anything, alluded to the fact that she knew I was seeing this, that this was her mother-in-law, anything of that nature. She was excellent from that point of view, but I can remember feeling kind of funny! (B: Unclear) You know, having a little gee, you know, um, what should I be doing here, that kind of thing, um, but feeling a little funny about it. And it was the woman herself, the patient who said, oh ya, my daughter-in-law, dada, dada, dada, and I said oh, oh ya, I do know her, aha. (Laughs) So I remember feeling a little peculiar about that.

Um, but other than that I remember the psyche experience as being not overwhelmingly eventful. Um, not... left me with a thing that maybe psyche nursing maybe wasn't going to be my absolute forte, um, not something I would want to work in forever, but I enjoyed it for the most part. I did enjoy that one.

B: Do you recall any highlights of your senior year?

P: I recall lots of things senior year. I recall being from a personal point of view, probably much happier senior year than I had been prior

studying. (Both Laughing) It was an awful thing. And as a net result we both finished undergraduate programs on time with no deferments and lots of debt. Um, he finished a Masters program right away. He went right into a masters program, I supported him. I refused to support him for a PhD, so he doesn't have one to this day (laughs). Sooner or later he'll get one I suppose. And I got caught up in the work force thing, kind of thing, um, so I am just really now seriously thinking about coming back for my Masters. Actually I've seriously thought about it on a number of occasions, but really getting my duff into gear hoping to get, do something constructive. Um, because again....

B: That's exciting Pat.

P: Ya, it is exciting! Again, we both graduated in 72 with Bachelors. He went on, I supported him, he got his Masters in 74. Our daughter was born in 75, so that you know, life just takes its course sometimes. I sometimes think it has, life has a will of its own and you don't always decide some things. You know, you react (unclear) sometimes, rather than pro-act occasionally.

B: Where was your first apartment here in Lowell?

P: Oh God, that's a whole story in of itself. Um, it was in a street called Agawam Street here in Lowell, which is not really maybe the best section of Lowell. It was in South Lowell. And we had looked and looked for a place. We had no money honey, kind of thing, um, except what we got as gifts and we both had some financial aid, and we both were working um, you know, at least part time. Going to school full time, working part time. I use to do crazy shifts. I mean I would do nights if I had um, say a semester break or a week out of school, because you get shift differential when you do nights kind of thing, and that's more money.

Um, but eventually, my grandmother had owned this piece of property here in Lowell. It was a three family tenement type house and she had tenements on the first and second floor and her third floor had been unused for years and years and years kind of thing. And finally she said to me, gee, if you guys are willing to fix it up, she says, it's a dilapidated mess, but if I will buy the materials, um, if you are willing to put the time and effort into fixing this place up, then you can have it. Not for free she said, but for very cheap rent. And very cheap rent was extremely cheap rent, she was very good to us kind of thing. She liked um, I was her first grandchild and she really liked Andy kind of thing.

B: Oh I see.

P: Um, but so we did! Um, we got together, Andy and myself, and our friends, and my Mom and my Dad, and his mother and his father, and we whipped this place into shape. It was um, it had a kitchen to it, it had a living room to it, um, and two bedrooms and a bath, and it was on the third floor, third floor hike up kind of thing. Um, and we lived there for... we probably lived there till 74, give or take a little bit. Somewhere, ya, somewhere in that ball park, 73, 74. We lived there for several years anyway.

B: So the senior year was a good year for you personally and scholastically and academically (P: Umhm) um, anything memorable about graduation?

P: Ya, I loved it! (Laughs) Um, I can remember my graduation day. I can remember um... because Andy too, he finished up with his Bachelors um, the same year that I did, but he went, he didn't go through a graduation ceremony, he went straight into a Masters program kind of thing. So he graduated, he had a real official graduation type thing in seventy-four. So this was a one man show, this was for me kind of thing. And I can remember the graduation day and the cap and gown and the dress that I had and you know, what have you. And I can even remember to this day some of the gifts um, that I got. Um, I can remember going to graduation and then being... I don't know what we were limited to, but you know, there are always limited seats, you can't have your entire family kind of thing. And I can remember begging and borrowing, and steal...

END OF TAPE II, SIDE A

TAPE II, SIDE B BEGINS WITH "B" SPEAKING

B: Tape II, side II. It's May 3rd. I'm Barbara Bruno and I'm continuing my oral history with Pat Moysenko. And we are at a point in time where Pat is describing her graduation.

P: Umhm, but I can remember my mother and father, and Andy's mother and father, and Andy. Um, my sister, I have as I say, I've had lots of brothers and sisters, but I have one who's all of eleven months and six days younger than I and we've been very very close, you know, since the day one kind of thing. Um, and who else was there? My uncle came, um, a couple of my aunts. I mean you know, it was a big you know, family thing. And as I say, I was the first, my parents first child. I was the first grandchild on both sides of the family. You know, this was my college graduation, everybody was there and very supportive and very proud. I can remember my mother had wanted to have like a graduation party for me and I kept saying no, I want to do this myself. I want to invite people back to our apartment, I'll do the food, I'm going to have this and I'm going to have that. And she kept saying, at least tell me what I can bring then, you know. (Laughing) I was into, Oh, I do it myself thank you, kind of thing, (laughing) at that point in life.

But I can remember having everybody back to the apartment and having a great time. Some of the gifts that I got for graduation were in the form of money. And we had both worked, Andy and I both, really very very hard to you know, continue to go to school and to eat and not run into (humungous?) amounts of debt and not have to borrow money, and be very as independent as is possible, you know, as was possible kind of thing. So it was real nice to be able to look forward to a little bit of money. And we had this little ceramic bank on our coffee table, that whenever we had any spare cash and that was always in the form of something round and copper you know, um, we would put into this bank. So after my graduation, with the money that I got as gifts for graduation, we cracked opened the old piggy bank and we went to Canada, um, driving trip to Canada just the two of us.

We had had a honeymoon courtesy of Andy's folks thank God, because we wouldn't have you know, without them. They had sent us to Bermuda. They paid for the whole thing, lock, stock and barrel, and that was their wedding gift to us, which was the only reason I would accept it kind of thing. But this was really um, you know, we had worked real hard for things and this was the first vacation vacation we had had kind of thing. I can remember finding grocery lists tucked in odd pockets you know, years later that I had... you could see where I had made out the grocery list and then gone back and crossed things off because they were too expensive, we couldn't afford it kind of thing. We would have to make due with dada, dada. I can remember having four of us, Irene and her husband, Andy and I, getting together one night and between the four of us we bought a steak kind of thing, and we were doing the steak. This was, you have to understand this was gold in these days! And our entertainment was to get together and have dinner and play cards, or do something of this nature. Well Andy, the klutz, dropped the steak and we picked it up off the floor and we rinsed it off, and we ate the steak!
(Both laughing)

B: Oh that's great!

P: It's awful in retrospect. It really is awful in retrospect, but um, you know, that's the way things were.

B: Did you have a job before you graduated, or did you go from graduation to the Canada trip, or (unclear)?

P: Well I did couples of things. Um, I was somewhat remiss. I had a job when I graduated, yes, but I really should have been much more concerned than I was apparently at this point in life. Um, I had decided at that point that I kind of liked St. Joseph's. I'd been kind of a part time employee there you know, for over these years kind of thing, and that I didn't see any reason to go. I didn't have this burning desire to go in town and do that kind of thing.

B: In town you mean?

P: Boston. Um, I still don't kind of thing. Um, never did have that kind of, kind of you know, burning desire, but um. So I was very happy at St. Joseph's, but, well I shouldn't say unfortunately, it worked out very well, um, I neglected to mention that to them. You know, I mean I didn't really go down to personnel, or to the nursing department and say you know, hey geeze, you know, I'm ready to graduate. It was like April before I got around to doing that. And here I am due to graduate in what, late May, early June kind of thing. Um, would you be interested in having me, you know, stay here kind of thing? As luck would have it, yes, they were very interested in having me stay. So I did have a job when I graduated, but I was not, didn't seem to worry me. I don't know why (laughs) it didn't seem to worry me.

I remember doing a very, very stupid, stupid thing um, when I first graduated though. You had to send in your forms to take State Boards, and I went to Canada first. And I came home, and I sent in my forms to take my State Boards. And at the time I didn't think anything of it. It wasn't until much later that I realized that I had been very stupid. And people, kids that I had gone to school with were getting their admission tickets and pictures back from the Board of Registration, and saying you know, thus and such sight, thus and such day kind of thing. And gee, I didn't get one you know, how come kind of thing? Well I called them and they said oh yes, we have your application here. And this was, State Boards at this point were offered in July and in February, much like they are now. Um, and they said yes, and you're scheduled to take State Boards in February, dada, dada. And I was like, oh, okay kind of thing. And I thought, well, alright. You know, no big deal. Ah, maybe that's not a problem. Gives me more time to study, more clinical experience. I was beginning to look at this very positively, until the people at the hospital got wind of it, kind of thing. And they said, no, no, no, you have to take the first available State Boards, or you cannot continue to work as a GN. And I said, huh? So I went through, I went from being pie in the sky elated, to about six months of pure misery kind of thing. Um, but I did take the State Boards in February, and I did pass them in February. And you know, life got itself back on track after that, but talk about stupidity kind of thing. I mean I just never thought. I went right from graduation to Canada, and came back. Ya, I took care of it. I should have taken care of it obviously before I left, but I didn't realize the consequences at that point! (Laughs)

B: What about the change from student to professional nurse? How was that? Did the program prepare you? Were you pleased? Was it a combination of things?

P: It was a combination okay, to be quite frank. Um, I think too, again, my horrendous error in there probably added to some of that. Um, but it was definitely a combination. I felt that yes, I was very well prepared for some things and not well prepared for other. The ones that I felt not as well prepared for were the skill oriented you know, kinds of things. I managed to get myself through four years and out, and I had done you know, the typical one catheterization kind of thing. So that the first couple of times I needed to do one as a GN in the clinical area, I needed a fair amount of support, you know, to get through the whole process and procedure. And again there were lots of, in the community at this point in time, lots of nurses. We were the first graduates from this program, and there were lots of nurses. I mean, St. Joe's no longer had their school of nursing, but they still had lots of recent graduates from their program kind of thing. Lowell General had lots of people, you know, around the city kind of things. So there was lots of that type of turmoil, you know, that went around. The conflict, and it really is a conflict between the three year, the four year kind of thing. Do we have to be out of here? (B: Yes) Between the three year and the four year kinds of things. And I felt sometimes caught up in the middle kind of thing, because obviously when you went through a four year program, you'd made a decision as to what you wanted to do. And I was in most cases I hope

at least, willing to talk about the conflict from a rational, or a reasonable point of view. I was quite willing to admit that some of the skill kinds of things I did feel somewhat lacking with. I was more than willing to accept advice and or assistance from anyone who was willing to offer it really. Um, but you didn't always find that people were real opened minded about it too. Um, people sometimes had real set kinds of things.

B: Did any other classmate join you at St. Joseph's?

P: Ya, there were numbers of us. Again, many of us who had already, who'd been working there was nursing assistants. Let me see, um, Doris Arpin when she graduated, (Pauling?) now, we had been there together as nursing assistants and continued as grads. Ann Dolan, who graduated from here was with us there. Who else was there? Celeste Tremblay, who graduated from here and again I remember being at St. Joe's for awhile. There were a number of people, I can't remember specifics you know, as to whom else at this point in time.

B: What was your first position?

P: Um, staff nurse.

B: And what type of a unit?

P: Um, () Orthopedic Unit. You know, orthopedic/med surge kind of thing. And I did that for a number of years. I went from being a staff nurse kind of person... well first I went being this non-entity, you know? (Both laugh)

B: Yes!

P: The G.N. nurse.

B: From July to February right?

P: Ya, um, it was a bad time. I remember that as being not good. I really thought about quitting.

B: Did they really stick to the letter of the law and put you right back to only being able to do those things that a nursing assistant could do?

P: Umhm, I couldn't do meds. Couldn't do meds, couldn't do this, couldn't do that, couldn't do this, couldn't do that. And you know, it was not a wonderful experience. Um, I really felt like... I blamed myself, yes, it was my fault, but sometimes you need someone else to blame, so sometimes I blamed whoever was getting in my way at the time, kind of thing. And I remember thinking, I want to quit, I want to do something else. And I can remember particularly Andy saying to me, so you go do something else for six months and then you take your state boards, where are you going to be kind of thing? At least this way you're getting some you know, experience, you're hanging in there kind of thing.

Um, but I went from being this non-entity to be a staff nurse. And then eventually, I've held numerous... I'd been at St. Joe's actually since I graduated, and I still enjoy it for the most part, but I've never held any one position for more than a few years. I went from staff nurse to like an assistant head nurse position and then to a head nurse, or nurse manager kind of position, and then to a staff development kind of person, and now it's like a supervisory, staff development, department head, whatever other hat I can find to wear. And I've enjoyed, I've enjoyed nursing, I've enjoyed most of the positions. In fact, I would say I've enjoyed all of the positions. It's just sometimes by the time I was ready to make a change, I was no longer enjoying the given position kind of thing, feeling somewhat limited or constrained by it.

B: How do you view the changes in nursing over the past, is it sixteen years now?

P: About that, ya.

B: Seen any great changes, things that are difficult to accept, or things that you're pleased to see have happened?

P: Lots of things have changed, um, many things I think for the better. I tend to try to keep a positive outlook on life, that's just my... tend to be an optimist. Um,...oh, I'm trying to pinpoint things. Everything from little things to big things. Um, little things being my bugaboo with caps that started way back in nursing school. And I mean you rarely see anybody, except a student occasionally, (laughs) with a cap to this day and age. And I see them as being nice for historical purposes, but relatively useless (laughing) kind of thing. So I was glad to see them kind of go down the pike.

Um, I see lots of things going on now, some of which, I mean immediately, in this immediate period in time, some of which are very short term solutions to very deep problems. And I'm not sure, I don't, I'm not saying the short term solutions don't have to be taken, but I sometimes see people taking them with this idea that this is a cure all kind of thing. Um, I realize for instance, we are in a process of developing what we call these patient care technicians. Um, I view these people as necessary, yes. They're kind of a grand and glorious nursing assistant if you will. I view these people in this community at this point in time as a necessity, yes, but I see it as a band-aide approach to a real deep problem. Whereas I see some people who tend to be very service related, for lack of a better way to put it, see it as the solution to the problem kind of thing.

Um, I still see the conflict existing in the education preparation of nurses. And in some cases, in some ways even deepening, sometimes I feel and maybe that's just a perception of a moment kind of thing. For awhile I remember, when I was very new into nursing, the conflict was between the Baccalaureate Grad and the Diploma Grad if you will. And now the Diploma Grad, ya, they still exist, but most of the schools, there are not that many schools around any longer. The grad herself though, the nurse still exist out there. And in some cases with just that

level of education if you will. And I don't mean just in a critical sense at that, but I mean (B: right) you know, not having gone on from there. And I'm sure people have lots of reasons, I mean I have lots of reasons for not pursuing a Masters up to date, but they still see themselves you know, and they are, a nurse. But I see the conflict there still existing, maybe somewhat less intense, but then now the A.D. programs have really got a real strong um, persona, you know? And so the conflict to me maybe has deescalated in other areas kind of thing.

B: What about procedures? Were you doing intravenous procedures when you got out of the ()?

P: Oh my God, um, and I don't mean this to be again, critical at all, it's just a recollection and I tend to be a little flip at times. But I remember our introduction here to IV's at University of Lowell was essentially, someone pointed one out on a patient and said, yup, this is one. This is an IV.

B: Oh, okay. (Laughs)

P: End of introduction to IV's kind of thing. So that was one of the things in the real world that when you got out there they expected you to know, you know, how to calculate and regulate a drip (), how to attach tubing, how to spot difficulties, how to you know, do this and do that and what have you. And I felt in many cases very ill-prepared to do that. I have seen over the years that grads are, seem to be better prepared for those kinds of nitty gritty skill kinds of things. And I have been very glad to see that.

I can remember too, meds, just meds as an entity. We did meds for our patients kind of thing, and we needed to know everything about that med and what have you, but when I got out of school they said, okay, um, as part of your orientation you'll be buddied with this experienced nurse and you will do meds for this entire thirty bed unit. And I said, daah! I mean I remember, I even remember the person who supervised me that very first day. She's a patient individual. Um, I don't think she's any longer in this area, but she's probably not much older than I, I mean three, four years at the most older than I, graduate from a three year diploma school. Uh, and I mean honest to God, I was doing the nines at ten fifteen. And I mean, I just didn't understand the pace kind of thing. And I think that they provided orientation for us as best they could, but orientation (progress?), I mean that's part of my life at this point, is to provide orientation for people, but they weren't what they are today at all kind of thing. Um, you know, they didn't make for any kind of a gradual experience, or they didn't do any kind of real preceptorship kind of thing. I mean you were out there, and there you were kind of thing.

B: What were the strengths of the program Pat, as you think back across time, um, in your preparation here at Lowell State?

P: Oh, I don't know, lots of strengths. Um, I'm trying to think of specifics. I think image was probably one. They, I remember the seeds

in retrospect being planted very, very early, that nursing was a profession; that nursing was a profession to be delt with; nursing was a profession to be respected; you were a professional, you were not an occupation I suppose, if you want to phrase it that way. I mean those seeds were planted deep down inside very first day you walked in the door here kind of thing. Um, and that nurses were really a force, um, should be a force and a voice to be delt with and to be reckoned with and you know, what nursing was, what nursing could do, for patients, with patients, their families, you know, all kinds of things, untangibles that you can sometimes can't quite get your finger on, or get them out of your mouth maybe. (Laughs)

B: Ya, () sort of getting an unbrella type of a shape that you were () and it was a very large picture that you saw for nursing.

P: Umhm, yeah. I think another strength of the program um, and that I see continued today in several ways was teaching. That nurses, that teaching, that education of patients and families and clients, or whatever you want to call them, was very much something that nurses were responsible for and accountable for. And I see, well even last night at the Sigma thing, Peggy Fitzgerald's award you know, in memory of her father hopefully you know, tends to foster that kind of thing. And I see that as being a very... again, I've become somewhat educationally oriented as I've gone down, you know, as my life has, has kind of evolved here, and I see that as being a very um, very big thing.

B: So we have your () of Lowell State, and I guess I'd like to begin finishing up on where you've been. We've sort of gotten you to the point where you're Assistant Head Nurse and a Nurse Manager of a unit. (P: Umhm) And was that an orthopedic unit?

P: Umhm. Well orthopedic, concentration of orthopedic with med surge.

B: With med surge, okay. So it was the same unit that you were at Assistant nurse. (P: aha) Okay. And since you've been a nurse first, initially it was after graduation, did you work any of the alternate shifts?

P: Oh, yes. Um, I prefer to work days, but one didn't get a position for straight days. I mean one did ones rotation. And in fact, even when I was in school as a um, not as a student, but when I functioned as a nursing assistant um, I use to rotate shifts. So I have done fully my fair share of 3 to 11, 11 to 7, doubles, um, you name it kind of thing. Um, I still prefer to work days and I still don't wind up working days. (Laughs) Tomorrow I've got scheduled one of those days that starts probably about 8:00 tomorrow morning and I'll finish at about 9:30 tomorrow night kind of thing. I mean that's a day, but it's kind of a day and a half, (B: that's for sure) you know, doing those kind of things. So I've done my fair share of every single shift, weekend, holiday, dada, dada.

I can remember before my daughter was born, of course nursing has always been predominantly female, and I never minded working

Christmas before my daughter was born. So I probably worked a good number of Christmas' you know, by swapping with people, um, until she was born, you know. And even since then actually, even after she was born, I worked my fair share if you will, um, of those, of Christmas kinds of things, did those kinds of things.

B: Did you have the experience of having students from the University of Lowell on your unit?

P: Ya I did! Aha! I've had students from University of Lowell on my unit when I was functioning as say, an Assitant Head Nurse and a Head Nurse. I've had them and delt with them in preceptorships, in, when I was doing staff development and even in, I'm currently precepting somebody from here. (Laughs) Um, so I've kind of you know, maintained ties. Um, I've also had students from the other programs, you know, the other local programs on my unit too. So not to give you know, (B: right) short shrift to anyone else if you will. Um, but ya, it was kind of fun.

I can remember meeting, I don't know what I was doing, but I happened to be flying through the lobby of the hospital one morning at whatever time, and Norma McQuade was at that point greeting a group of her students in the lobby. And she made reference to the fact that, and this is a grad from our program, dada, dada, dada. I just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, but I thought, gee, this feels pretty good, you know? (Both laugh) That's not too bad.

Um, I remember thinking too, um, that you know, we talked about the fact that I came out of here and I did this little non-entity thing for six months that was, you know, my fault, and then I was a staff nurse, and then I was an Assistant Head Nurse. Well I graduated from here in 72 and accepted a position as a Head Nurse in 74. So all of that, you know, kind of took place in about two years of time. (B: unclear) ya. And I can remember thinking back, lots of things you might do a little differently you know. Um, it was 1974, I was maybe 2½ years out of school, and pregnant when I took that position as a Head Nurse or Nurse Manager. Lots of things I'd do different, (both laugh) like say no when they ask you kind of thing. But I can remember thinking that after I had my daughter, I'd only been in the Head Nurse position for five or six months when I had her and I took a maternity leave kind of thing. And I remember thinking um, you know, when thinking about going back to work, well, alright, I've only been in this position for six months. I would really like to do it for at least a year before I decide to do something else, or whatever. So I remember going back to work full time, um, with a new born who was about six or seven weeks old at this point in time and I was going to try it out kind of thing. Well she's now twelve, and I'm still trying it out. I've been doing full time something or another since then, in nursing um, you know, all in nursing kind of thing. Variety of things.

I can remember um, accepting the Head Nurse position and saying... I mean, I was approached to take this position. It wasn't, at that point in life I didn't apply for it. It became vacant and the powers that be said gee, we think you'd do dada, dada. And that was very

flattering. But I remember thinking, I don't know how to do this. Uh, I'm really not prepared. I haven't been out of school long enough. I haven't had enough leadership stuff, um, I'm really nowhere near as skilled as some of their, and this is an awful thing to admit, as some of the three year grads maybe, that were still around kind of thing. I was perceiving myself, but um, it worked. I did okay! I got good reviews. What can I say?

B: Did you have a strong nursing leader at that point in time at the hospital? Were there role models that you had in St. Joe's?

P: Umhm. I had, yes, I would have to say I had several role models. Um, one of whom as a supervisor, was an immediate supervisor, who was herself, and again I don't mean this in a derogatory sense, just a description, she was a three year grad, and still is and has not done anything about getting a Bachelors kind of thing. Um, and apparently she was very good in some, in many leadership senses and she was very skilled also. And she apparently saw something in me. I don't know what, I never asked what, but it must have been worth developing, because she invested you know, a fair amount of time and effort you know, in doing that, in making sure that I felt good about things, kind of thing, and did things.

I also had someone who became my Assistant Head Nurse, um, which maybe sounds like a funny place to go for support kind of thing, but we were just about the same age, she was actually maybe a year older than I. We had just about the same birth dates. She graduated from a Baccalaureate Program in Buffalo, maybe a year ahead of me. And probably just, I mean I don't know why I wound up Head Nurse and she Assistant, probably just a fluke of time, or whatever kind of thing, but we also became good friends at that point in time. So we were, though I was the Head Nurse and she was the Assistant, we were a very much, mutually supportive you know, team if you will kind of thing. I had no compunctions about gee, I'm the boss and I don't consult you about thus. And so if I had a question that I thought she had, would have good input about, didn't phase me to say, hey, I want your opinion about, kind of thing. Um, and visa versa, you know? I mean, we seemed to develop a mutual respect and kind of helped each other through you know, some real trying, you know, some trying times kind of thing.

So there were, those are two people that come to mind when you ask about role models in a clinical situation, um, right away. There were others you know, there have been others too, in many instances.

B: So tell me a little bit about your current position?

P: Ah, it's a definite jack of all trades, master of none kind of thing. I work in an education department, I'm the supervisor in an education department that is charged with doing lots of stuff. We provide, we're a hospital wide education department, though I would have to say in all honesty, probably 85 to 90% of our work is with the Nursing Department. And most of the department is composed of nurses. Um, we provide orientation, we provide staff development, um, we provide, patient education comes out of my department, continuing ed for health care professionals comes out of my department, community education programs

come out of my department. So we are looking at doing educational kinds of activities with a wide variety of people. You know, as you can see, we do all kinds of stuff. Um, critical care, I have a critical care coordinator, I have a community ed coordinator, a patient ed coordinator and a, we call her an orientation coordinator for lack of a better term kind of thing. And I'm relatively new to the position. It's been about six or eight months I guess at this point. Um, and life has been extremely busy since we've started. We went, since I started this position, I went through a phase. We are now, um, have a complete compliment of you know, FTE's, full time equivalents, but I went through a phase for a few months when (laughs) at one point there was just two of us in a normal five person department kind of thing. So it was like day and night, you know, (laughs) kind of thing.

B: That's kind of hard when you're trying to get orientated to a new position ().

P: I still feel like I'm getting oriented to this particular position.

B: Do you have a community branch that moves out and does educational programs for the community through this position?

P: Yes. I have a nurse who is our community education coordinator who reports to me. What happens is, you know, I've described the positions, but ya, I have a community education coordinator, but she can't always do 100% of the community work, and sometimes there's a program or two that needs more than one person. So it's like you draw on your resources and your first resources are the members of your own department. So I do lots of funny stuff (laughs) on occasion. But um, I do, I've done everything from covering for people, doing direct patient diabetic education while my patient educator is on vacation. And I get a real kick out of going back and doing really, you know, clinical kinds of stuff. Um, to health screenings, um, blood sugar and cholesterol screenings, to continuing ed programs for nurses and other health professionals, to advance cardiac life support courses, to you know. That's one thing I love about this particular position, is the variety of things that I can wind up doing.

There's never enough time it seems to me for the administrative kinds of things that I ought to be doing, (both laugh) which is okay. Um, one of the things I'm considering at this point in life, very strongly considering, because it fits in at this point in life, and the need probably existed several years ago, but I'm beginning to acknowledge the need for a Master's lever, you know, preparation. And I'm very strongly considering, I can't do full-time, but a part-time in nursing administration, Masters level (prep thing?) in nursing administration here. My family life is such that, you know, it goes along fairly smoothly, you know, twelve year olds are relatively independent. Um, if I can just stop working sixty hours a week, I can take the rest of it and devote it. (Laughs)

B: Sometimes it is helpful to have that other, you know, the course work to do so that you can leave () full-time.

P: Ya, sometimes it is. I find you get caught up in gee, this has got to gee done, and this has got to get done, and you look around and gee, everybody else is really busy too, so it's well, it's got to get done, I'll do it!

You wonder sometimes, gee, if I didn't do it, what would happen?
You know?

B: I want you to mention some of your outside activities, particularly the position that you were elected to last night.

P: Well the election was actually two years ago, I got inducted or installed, or however one terms that. Um, I've been active over the last few....

END OF TAPE II, SIDE B