

SHARE YOUR STORY: STUDENT LIFE AT MUNDELEIN

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Mary Frances Consola's Oral History

Women and Leadership Archives

Loyola University Chicago

2020

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Mary Frances Consola conducted by Regina Hong on July 15, 2020. This interview is part of the Share Your Story: Student Life at Mundelein project, an oral history project to expand and enrich the Women and Leadership Archives' (WLA) records of Mundelein College's history through interviews with alumnae on student life.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the narrator. Timestamps are provided every five minutes, within a few seconds of that exact point in the audio. Sounds such as laughter and actions are in parentheses and notes added for context are in brackets.

TIME LOG AND OVERVIEW FOR SESSION 1

[0:00 – 5:00]: Consola's childhood, family background, reasons for enrolling at Mundelein, reason for choice of major and minor at Mundelein

[5:00 - 10:00]: Annual variety shows at Mundelein, Consola's own involvement in the shows, Class Days, Big Sister Program, Mundelein football team, Simon and Garfunkel concert, Early Bird Program for high school juniors and seniors at Mundelein, reason for Consola's father agreeing to her being a residential student

[10:00 - 15:00]: Student work on campus, Consola's work as a student aide for Sister Josetta Phoenix [BVM] and Dr. Michael Fortune, process of using various machines for work with English department, attending college day at Mundelein as a high school student, experience of living at Northland Hall, reason for there being mainly men on Loyola's campus at the time

[15:00 -20:00]: Dormitory (Northland Hall and Coffey Hall) facilities, residential rules, attendance at assemblies

[20:00 - 25:00]: Electrical appliances in dormitories, purchase of a popcorn popper, parties held at the dormitories, indoor swimming pool at Mundelein, lifesaving practice with Consola's friend, paper study breaks at Thirty-one Flavors, time spent at the lake with her friends, die-off of smelt in 1967

[25:00 - 29:31]: Blizzard of 1967, favorite place to study in Mundelein, taking an economics test, meal cards

*Note: The segment on meal cards continues in the next recording.

TIME LOG AND OVERVIEW FOR SESSION 2

[0:00 -5:00]: Meal cards, friends skipping lunch to get Diet Rite, dishes served at the tea room, dances and live bands at Mundelein, Granada Theater, The 400 Theater, meaningful experiences at Mundelein – literature

[5:00 -10:00]: Starting a study group “Null Set”, lessons learnt from study group, events that impacted Consola’s Mundelein years, student involvement in Selma March, Vietnam War protests and presidential campaigns

[10:00 - 15:00]: Events that impacted Consola’s Mundelein experience, studying Vatican II documents during theology courses, social aspects of being at Mundelein, Move-In Day, meeting other students on campus, Consola’s definition of the “full college experience”

[15:00 – 20:00]: Consola’s definition of the “full college experience”, choice of residential hall, Big Sister program logistics and activities, punishments for not wearing beanie as a freshman, Consola’s experience of being a Big Sister

[20:00 - 25:00]: Rules for walking on the marble staircase in the Skyscraper, sports at Mundelein, women’s sports in general

[25:00 – 30:00]: Popular books and movies during Consola’s time at Mundelein, Class Day traditions, Mundelein’s transition from semester to trimester system

[30:00 - 35:00]: Mundelein’s transition from semester to trimester system, skits for Class Day, Consola’s job as a student aide for Sister Joretta, student jobs on campus

[35:00 – 40:00]: Work for Dr. Michael Fortune, reason for non-involvement in campus student activist efforts, reflections on how timing of Mundelein school years with important events such

as Vatican II shaped her college experiences, reflections on continued friendships with classmates

[40:00 – 42:01]: Reflections on being recognized by and meeting other Mundelein alumnae at various places

NARRATOR BIO

Mary Frances Consola was born in 1946 and the second of five children. Consola was a member of the Mundelein class of 1968, and was the first in her family to graduate from college. Her parents moved to Orland Park, a suburb to the southwest of Chicago in the 1950s, where they opened a restaurant. Consola and her siblings learnt to cook as well as perform other tasks such as cleaning and sweeping at the restaurant.

Consola majored in Mathematics and minored in Economics at Mundelein College, where she lived on campus at Northland Hall for all four years. Some activities she took part in were being part of the football team, participating in the annual revue shows during her sophomore and senior years, and the Big Sister program. She also worked as a student aide for Sister Josetta Phoenix, BVM, and Dr. Michael Fortune. After graduating from college, Consola worked primarily in the life insurance industry for over 40 years. In 2019, she joined the Mundelein Board

INTERVIEWER BIO

Regina Hong is a graduate student in the Digital Humanities program at Loyola University Chicago and a Sesquicentennial Scholar at the WLA. She was raised in Singapore and lived in Japan for two years prior to moving to Chicago

Transcriptionist: Regina Hong

Session: 1 — Part 1 of 2

Interviewee: Mary Frances Consola

Locations: Chicago, IL via Zoom

Interviewer: Regina Hong

Date: July 15, 2020

[BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW]

[0:00]

Q: Okay, so it's recording now. For the record, my name is Regina Hong, a graduate assistant at the Women and Leadership Archives, interviewing Mary Frances Consola from the Class of 1968 on 15 July [2020] for the Share Your Story: Student Life at Mundelein Project by Zoom. I'm in Chicago and Mary is also in Chicago. So, Mary, to start us off, could you tell me a little about yourself and your family, like the year you were born in and where you were raised?

Consola: Okay, I was actually born in 1946. I was – my father was in World War II when he came home in November of 1945 and I was born 9 months later. So I am the post-war baby boom, along with a lot of other people! I have four siblings. I have an older brother – I have a – he's three years older than I am. I have a — then I have a younger brother, who's not quite two years younger, and then I have two younger sisters. One is four and a half years younger, the other is five and a half years younger.

My parents moved out to Orland Park in the early 1950s. It was all country and farmland and they opened up a restaurant. And we lived in an apartment above the restaurant. We all learnt how to cook in the restaurant. We all learnt how to wash dishes in the restaurant. And how to sweep floors for the restaurant.

I was the first one of my family to actually graduate from college. My older brother, Bill, was — went into the service, then of course my other siblings, they all went to college. My father had told me when I was in high school he would pay for my college, provided I picked a school in Chicago. So, I looked around at different schools in Chicago and I will go into a little bit why and how I picked Mundelein. Mundelein was not at the top of my list. I was considering DePaul University but at the time DePaul did not have resident students, it was strictly commuter. And I really didn't want to be a commuter student — I wanted the full college experience of living on campus.

In high school, I was very good in a lot of different subjects. In fact, I never studied in high school and got A's. And the one thing I didn't like about school was typing papers. It's not that I didn't like doing the research or putting my ideas together — it was just the physical act of typing the paper because we didn't have word processing, we had manual typewriters. So if you typed a five-page paper even and you take it out and you start proofreading and you've got a mistake at the bottom of the first page, you got to re-type the whole paper. Or maybe the mistake was in the middle of the second page. So, you would — I would wind up typing at least that first page five or six times before the paper was finally —. So I just did not want to type papers. So,

put yourself into the mindset of a seventeen-year-old. I figured that I need to maximize my fun time in college. So if I were to major in English or history or any subject that required typing papers, that would not be maximizing my fun time. So that left me with the math and the sciences. But then I realized, well, if I major in biology or chemistry or even physics, I would have to spend time in a lab and then I will have to type up a lab report – isn't that just another paper? So that left me with math as my major.

So I — so I started Mundelein, I was intent on majoring in math. So my major at Mundelein was math, and I minored in economics because I wanted to be able to get a job when I graduated. And at that time, Mundelein did not offer a business degree. They did offer accounting courses, but you had to take the accounting courses through the econ department. So that's kind — that's really why I had almost a double major in math and econ.

[5:00]

Some of the activities that I got involved with at Mundelein. Mundelein had an annual variety show. And each of the classes would come up with a skit. And the skit would somehow illustrate the theme of the show. For example, my senior year, the theme was “Games ‘68” – We Gotta Play”. So we came up with a skit involving different schoolyard games like hoola hoop, and just other types of games. So I was in our class skit my sophomore and senior years. I had donated the script from our senior year skit already to the WLA [Women and Leadership Archives] about two years ago.

Other activities that we had. We had what were called “Class Days”. And there were themes for these Class Days. It was basically, everyone in the class would dress according to the theme, and it would be in Lewis Center, which was the student center at Mundelein. Lewis Center was sort of —was in the basement of Coffey Hall – was where it was actually located. So sophomore year, the theme was “Fabulous Fifties”. Junior year, it was “Saturday Night at the Movies”. And in senior year, it was “Flower Children”.

Now, I don’t — I — now first — junior year, I and my friends decided we would go as Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. But we couldn’t get enough people to be dwarves, so we were Snow White with five dwarves and the evil stepmother we had. And there’s a picture of us in our senior book in our costume. In senior year, I and three of my friends went as hippies and we painted flowers on our legs. And I must — and afterwards, I think I soaked for hours in the bathtub to get the paint off. And there’s a picture of us in our senior book and also in our class tribute video as the hippies.

I was involved with the Big Sister program when I was at Mundelein, and the Big Sister program would be an upperclassman would take a freshman under her wing and kind of show them the ropes of college life. So I was a Big Sister my junior year and my senior year at Mundelein.

Mundelein had a football team. My junior year and senior year, we played Loyola. We beat Loyola I know in my junior year. (laughs) I don’t know if we beat them senior year, but I wouldn’t be surprised if we did.

One of the things at Mundelein — there were a lot of times concerts, there were lectures, just different events where you would have to buy a ticket. And if you ushered for an event, you got in for free. In November of 1967, Simon and Garfunkel performed onstage at Mundelein College. And I was an usher for the Simon and Garfunkel concert. Simon and Garfunkel, for some reason, thought Mundelein College was in Mundelein, Illinois. When they realized their mistake — they drove to Mundelein, Illinois, they might have even gone to the seminary and found out where Mundelein College really was — the concert started a little late, but it was really a very good concert. And it was one of my — wasn't — I think it was probably my first concert, actually, of a popular act.

Some of the programs at Mundelein. Mundelein basically had its academic program, but Mundelein allowed high school juniors and seniors to take a summer course. And the program was called “The Early Bird Program”. The summer of 1964, before I started at Mundelein, I took “Number Theory”, and it was my first college course, my first math course. It was taught by Sister Mary Neal [Sister Cecelia (Neal) Moran, BVM], who was the chairman of the Math department at the time — she later became Sister Cecilia Moran [BVM] after Vatican II. One of the things that the Early Bird class did for me was it did — it convinced my father that I really needed to stay at Mundelein as a resident student because my commute was about an hour and forty-five minutes each way from home. So I was doing like a three-plus-hour commute every day. And that convinced my father that perhaps I should be a resident student, which was exactly what I wanted him to say at the time.

[10:00]

A lot of students worked on campus. For example, students worked in the bookstore, students ran the elevators that are in the main lobby. I worked for Sister Joretta Phoenix [BVM]. I started working for Sister Joretta the second semester of my sophomore¹ year and I did typing for her. Sister Joretta was having a summer course called “English as Second Language” and she needed someone to type up different materials for her. She shared an office with Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt [BVM] and the wind-up was, even though I went to the office daily, I saw more of Sister Jean than I did of Sister Joretta.

The next year, my sophomore year, I continued working for Sister Joretta. She had become the acting chairman of the English department. I also typed up for two new English faculty members that year, Mrs. Sara Sokoloff and Miss Sylvia Hajek. So I did typing for them as well.

In junior year, Dr. Michael Fortune became the chair of the English department. So he recommend — she — Sister Joretta recommended me to Dr. Fortune. When I first met Dr. Michael Fortune, he told me that Sister Joretta recommended me, but he had some reservations about having a non-English major as his student aide. Then, he said the more that he thought about it, the more it made sense because I wouldn't be typing up any of my tests or other materials. So some of my friends who were English majors would occasionally ask me what's on Dr. Fortune's tests, and I would simply tell them, well, I can't tell you that but if I were you, I would study real hard.

¹ The interviewee has corrected this to ‘freshman’ year during the transcript review. ‘Sophomore’ has been retained in this transcript for consistency with the recording.

In senior year, I continued as Dr. Fortune's student aide. Through my campus jobs, I learnt about mimeograph machines, and Xerox machines, and copy machines. Those machines were up on the tenth floor of the Skyscraper, I believe. Sister Jerellen [Sister Jerellen Tangney, BVM] was in charge of that equipment. And before you could use it, you had to be trained, and you had to be okay-ed by Sister Jerellen or one of her student aides. Otherwise, you would have to leave whatever you wanted copied — like in an inbox — and wait for them to get around to do it. So I got trained and I was able to do whatever copying I needed for the English department.

The experience of living on campus during 1960s was, I guess, wonderful, educational, and interesting. In the 1960s, Mundelein hosted on campus a day for high school juniors and seniors. The college day was always on Lincoln's birthday — which is February 12 — and that was a state holiday in Illinois. My junior year in high school, I, with about eight or nine of my high school friends went to Mundelein for the day. In one of the classes that we were observing, we recognized someone from our high school, Maryellen McGreevy. Afterwards we talked to her and she invited us to her room in the dorm in Coffey Hall because that was the only dorm at that time. So, we went and we met Maryellen's friends, and we visited and then afterwards, Maryellen showed us the shortcut to Loyola's campus from the back door of Coffey Hall. And I remember her saying, "Maybe I will see one of you here in a couple years." And as we were walking, I was thinking to myself, not me! I was the only one who wound up at Mundelein. So never say never is the lesson that I learnt. I went to the high school day my senior year and I was the only one from my high school who went. And I had already decided I was going to be at Mundelein that fall.

I lived in the Northland, on the third floor, all four years. I lived in Room 305 the first two years and Room 307 the last two years. Both my rooms overlooked Loyola's student center, which today is the main parking garage on the Lake Shore campus. But it was always — it was always fun kind of looking over at the student center and watching the Loyola students come and go.

[15:00]

At that time, most of the students on Loyola's campus were men. There weren't that many women on Loyola's campus at that time, because I believe Loyola's campus was more for the science and math areas whereas strictly liberal arts were downtown. I lived — let's see — all the Northland rooms — okay, first of all, let me explain a little bit about the Northland. The Northland was an apartment building that Mundelein had bought. So it took them maybe some time to get the existing tenants out of the building and then to renovate the rooms for students. So my freshman year, the Northland was strictly a five-day residence hall, which meant we came back to school maybe Sunday some time and we left on Friday. In my sophomore year, the Northland had changed to a seven-day residence hall, and in my freshman year, students lived on the second through fourth floors, and then my sophomore year, students were on the second through sixth floors and the first floor were classrooms at the Northland. The main entrance to Loyola's Lake Shore campus is where the Northland stood because it was — it had been torn down so it's no longer there. There was also another apartment building between the Northland and Mundelein's Skyscraper building that was called the Spanish Arms building. Of course, that's torn down as well. A lot of things happened in fifty-plus years, as you can imagine.

All the Northland rooms had a full-size refrigerator, and this is from when it was an apartment building. They also had a complete bathroom — a bathtub, but no shower. Again, this is from when it was an apartment building. Coffey Hall, on the other hand, had a communal shower, communal bathrooms, telephones in the hall. In the Northland, we could get a phone installed in our room — we had to pay the phone bill. So typically, students would split the bill among the roommates who were in the room. Each floor in the Northland had a lounge, with a TV, couches, and laundry facilities. I think it cost like twenty-five cents to do laundry — to do the w — use the washer — and another twenty-five for the dryer — or maybe it might have been ten cents — but I mean it cost.

So freshman year, every weekend I went home, every weekend I brought home my laundry and I can remember my mother telling me, “Can't you do laundry at that — at school?” (laughs). I said, “But it costs money!” [in] response. When I became a seven-day resident during my sophomore year — I did laundry. On Fridays at the Northland — and I think this also went for Coffey Hall — you had to take the sheets off your bed, you had to take your towels down to a linen room. And then, you would pick up your clean sheets and your clean towels. If you didn't drop off your dirty or used linens, you didn't pick up clean linens. So on Friday mornings, there was always a rush for people, you know, they were bringing down their sheets and towels to get ready to go home. Or, you know, picking up their clean linens to make up their beds.

We had a resident handbook, which I donated to the WLA. And the resident handbook had a list of dos and don'ts. For example, you had to have your bed made. You had to have the bathroom

cleaned, including polishing the chrome. There were rules about the curfew — the curfew Monday through Thursday I believe was like ten o'clock, Friday and Saturday it was midnight. You had to — you couldn't wear any jeans, slacks or shorts in the — in the Skyscraper building at all, you had to wear dresses, skirts, blouses or sweaters to classes. You had to wear cap and gown with white gloves for formal assemblies. There were little slips that you had to fill out and you had to turn in as you are leaving the auditorium. So then this Dean of Students would go through to see whether or not you attended the assembly. Now some students were very creative — let's suppose you are going to go to the assembly but I'm feel like, I don't want to go to that assembly, I'd much rather do something else, so I would give you my slip to turn in. So students would sometimes turn in slips for other students and get around that rule.

[20:00]

The other thing is in the residence halls, we didn't have — microwaves weren't invented yet. But students did have electric coffee pots, hotplates and popcorn poppers. Beginning of my senior year, I went to the Granville Hardware Store and bought a popcorn popper for nine dollars and ninety-nine cents. It still makes great popcorn. It's the first appliance I ever bought, and I still use it from time to time! So I mean it works beautifully — it was the best, you know, ten dollars that I ever spent.

Often students would host parties in their rooms. And the parties might be a birthday party or it could be another celebratory party or just an excuse for a party. My friend, Mary Anne Kloss, decided — and her roommate, Paddy Watterlohn — decided to have a Halloween party on Sunday. I don't know if that — if Sunday was Halloween or if Halloween was the next day — I

don't really remember. And Mary Anne thought — they both lived in the Northland so they had a bathtub — so Mary Anne thought it would be fun to dunk for apples. Now you would put apples in a tub of water and you would have people, you know, try to grab an apple with their mouth — you can't use your hands! And Mary Anne thought it would be even more fun if all the stems were removed from the apples. So I helped Mary Anne remove the stems from the apples in the bathtub. So as the guests came to this Halloween party, they were invited to go dunk for apples. One guest, Madonna Carsello, had come from home and she was dressed in a very nice dress — so she went in and she dunked for apples. So we were all in the other room and we hear a splash and Madonna fell into the tub. I don't know if she ever got an apple (laughs) but she was really wet when she came out. So Mary Anne and Paddy were running around getting towels to help her dry off. Not all our parties were that wild (laughs). That was — but that happened — I think it was junior year or senior year.

Mundelein had an indoor swimming pool in the Skyscraper building, and on Wednesday nights, students could go swimming — and that's when we could wear jeans or shorts in the Skyscraper or slacks. One of my friends, Michele Novak, was taking lifesaving as her physical education course. And Michele needed to practice on how to rescue drowning people. So there were many Wednesday nights when I think Michele almost drowned me because I was one of her victims (shoulders shaking in laughter) she had practice on.

Paper study breaks. I and my friends would walk to 31 Flavors on Granville Avenue. Often, we would see other Mundelein students coming from — or going to — 31 Flavors. That was the first 31 Flavors I had ever been at. It was also the place where I first had Rocky Road ice-cream —

and I still enjoy a good dish, or cone, of Rocky Road ice-cream and I have been to several 31 Flavors since.

Other times, my friends and I would walk along the lake. I mean, we had that beautiful lake. In fact, when I went for my Master's program — I went up to Northwestern for my Master's program — now, my mother commented to me that I needed to be at a school near a lake and I said yes. We would walk along the lake, climb on the rocks and just sit. But one year — I think it might have been summer of '67, fall of '67 — there was a die-off of smelt fish. Now smelt fish are very small, silver fish. And the whole downtown just stunk of fish, Mundelein's campus and Loyola's campus just stunk, it was like very fishy. I mean, the fish were dead, they were floating up on the surface of the lake near the shore and they extended out! One of my friends, Paddy Watterlohn, turned poetic and wrote a poem in honor of the fish. It started out, "O silver slip of silver fish". I don't remember the rest of the poem — I will have to ask Paddy sometime if she still has that poem.

[25:00]

In January 1967, which was my junior year at Mundelein, I was taking statistics with Mrs. Driscoll. She had scheduled a test for Friday on January 27, okay, so of course I and my friends were studying for this statistics test. Well, Thursday sometime — maybe late morning or whatever — it started snowing in Chicago. And it didn't stop snowing until sometime early Friday. When it d — got finished, there was twenty-three inches of snow dumped on Chicago. The city shut down and so did Mundelein College, which meant no statistics test! So, did I really take this extra time to study my statistics? (shakes head) No, I didn't. My friend Paddy borrowed her roommate's camera. Paddy and I and Mary Pat Cassidy and Michele Novak went out into the

snow, took pictures, played in the snow, and had a great time not studying statistics. Some of the pictures of — that Paddy and I took that day are in our senior book and also in our class tribute video as well. I remember later in the day, we found out that the Granada Movie Theater was opened so we decided to go to a movie. I don't know when I actually studied statistics — I might have done it Sunday night, okay, or Monday morning (laughs) but it wasn't that day when I had the extra day.

One of my favorite places to study on campus was on the — in the Skyscraper building. It was a room that was on the fourth and fifth floors. What it was, I believe, originally it was the college library and there were desks in there for students to use. So often, when I was like — had an hour or two between classes, instead of going back to the dorm, I would go there to study. And I remember, I went there one afternoon before an econ test and I thought to myself, what could be on this test. We had studied — quite extensively — classical economic theory and Keynesian economic theory and I thought there could only be — there possibly only could be one question on this test — compare and contrast classical economic theory with Keynesian economic theory. So I started writing everything I could recall, I started drawing graphs to illustrate different points. And I felt confident that I knew the material. I went into the classroom, I got a blue book — because we wrote our exams in these blue books — and I don't remember if the instructor wrote our test on the board or handed us on a piece of paper but the test was one question - “Compare and contrast classical economic theory with Keynesian economic theory”. And I thought, did I ever luck out on that one! I think for the first — for one time — I really guessed right, I didn't study something that wasn't going to be on the test (laughs). Needless to say, I

aced that test. So, I mean, that room always holds a special place in my heart because if I had not gone there to study, I wouldn't have come up with what the one question would have been.

We had meal cards living as resident students, and the meal cards covered the cost of our meals. There were, like, for each day a semester — because each semester or term you got a new card, that thing— so there would be “B” for breakfast, “L” for lunch, “D” for dinner. And you would go into the Tea Room or you would go by the cashier and you would get one of those things punched, whatever —

[INTERRUPTION]

Transcriptionist: Regina Hong

Session: 1 — Part 2 of 2

Interviewee: Mary Frances Consola

Locations: Chicago, IL via Zoom

Interviewer: Regina Hong

Date: July 15, 2020

[0:00]

Q: Okay, there we go, all right!

Consola: All right! Ready?

Q: Yes, ready for it!

Consola: Okay. We had meal cards which covered the cost of our meals. I believe lunch was a maximum of sixty cents. Now don't forget, this is — these are prices from fifty-two years ago, so they are a lot cheaper. So, my friends, Mary Anne Kloss and Paddy Watterlohn, never ate lunch. So they would take their meal cards, and they would go to Lewis Center, and buy six cans of Diet Rite — pop. And they would stock their refrigerator with the Rite — Diet Rite pop. They have a lot of different flavors.

I generally ate all my meals in the Tea Room in the Skyscraper. You know, today the Tea Room really is no more. And what I had in the Tea Room — a lot of stuff I had — was a first because I had never been away from home before. I had my first Coke with lemon which I find really quite nice. I still like a nice glass of Coke with lemon in it. I had my first taste of macaroni and cheese which I never really had at home. I had lamb with mint jelly which we never had. I had tuna casserole which we never had at home. And then there was the ever-popular mystery meat and as I mentioned earlier, my parents had a restaurant and we never served any of those dishes in our restaurant. We basically served food that my father liked.

Social activities at Mundelein. A lot of times on Friday nights, there would be a mixer — which is a dance — with a live band in McCormick Lounge at Coffey Hall. One of the regular bands was a group of Loyola students who called themselves “The Uncalled Four”. Other Chicago-area bands played. I believe the Buckingham and New Colony Six also might have played at our mixers.

Granada and The 400 theaters were both within walking distance of Mundelein College. The Granada Theater, of course, was torn down and I believe that’s where Loyola has, I think, a dorm or an apartment building, right at the bend of Sheridan Road and Broadway. The 400 Theater is further down on Sheridan Road and what was interesting about The 400 Theater were the extra-wide seats at the end of some aisles. Those were probably the “date” seats because they were very wide seats, you know, big enough for possibly a couple.

During my senior year, because I was twenty-one and most of my classmates were at least twenty-one, we would go to the Red Garter which — to listen to the banjo. The Red Garter had Ladies' Night on Tuesday nights so every Tuesday night, there would be a contingent of Mundelein students, mostly seniors, at the Red Garter to listen to the banjo music.

Some of the meaningful experiences that I had at Mundelein. When I was in grade school, in high school, the only literature that I really studied was English literature. I don't mean American literature, I mean (emphasizes) English literature. So much so that I thought the only real, and good, literature was English literature! But I had a couple friends — one was a Spanish major, one was a French major — and they set me straight, that English is not the only literature in the world. I have since discovered a lot more good, and really great, literature since then.

One of my most meaningful experiences at Mundelein was being part of a study group. Although I really didn't realize it was a study group until I was in my Master's program at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management. That was almost twenty years after I graduated from Mundelein.

[5:00]

What had happened during the first term of my junior year, I was taking a course called "Algebraic Structures" — was an upper-division math course — and I received a pink slip. Now, a pink slip is a warning that tells you — the student that if you continue as you are going along, you will probably fail the course. Well, I was upset when I got the pink slip. And yes, I was struggling with the course — it had made absolutely no sense to me, I couldn't understand a

thing about what the course was about! After I calmed down a little bit, I realized, I can't be the only one who received a pink slip! So I started discreetly asking people, one by one, "Did you get a pink slip?" "Did you get a pink slip?"

One of my friends said she didn't get a pink slip in algebra, but she got one in probability theory. So, we decided since we all lived in the Northland, we were all math majors, why don't we study together once in a while after dinner? So, our occasional gatherings after dinner soon turned into daily gatherings after dinner. The core group of the "Null Set" was myself, Mary Pat Cassidy, Mary Anne Kloss, and Paddy Watterlohn. Sometimes, Michele Novak would join us and once in a while, other students who lived in the Northland or Coffey Hall or even commuters might join us for a particular course. They would come up to us sometime during the day, you know, "Can I study with you guys?" And we would say sure because we always figured that, hey, they may have some insight that we don't have so why not let them study?

We called ourselves the "Null Set". If you know anything about mathematics or set theory, a null set is an empty set — there's nothing there — so we called ourselves the "Null Set". And what I learnt from the "Null Set" and this sort of daily study sessions was, I really learnt how to explain my approach and solution to a problem. I learnt how to present something. I learnt how to challenge if I didn't understand something. I learnt to work as a team. Those skills were all extremely useful in my career as an actuary, an actuarial analyst, a business analyst, and a data analyst. We still get together on a regular basis — about four times a year — on our birthdays. It

just was — still — nice! I mean, that was one experience that Mundelein gave me — it gave me some friendships that have lasted for more than half a century, which I think is a great thing.

Three events that had an impact on my Mundelein years were the Vietnam War, the Selma March and presidential elections. Don't forget, I started at Mundelein in September of 1964. If you want to take into account the Early Bird program, it was June of '64. And I graduated in June of '68. Some of my classmates were at the Selma March, and the WLA has a picture of them — I'm sure you have seen the picture. They were sitting right up front wearing Mundelein sweatshirts — well, that group were all my classmates. I can still name who was in the picture.

Marge Sklencar was one of my classmates and I met her in the Early Bird program. She dropped out at — in — our senior year to work full time on Senator Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign. Marge was also active in the Vietnam War protests as well. She had gone to some meetings, I know, at University of Chicago — when she came back from this meeting, she — you know — I talked to her and [what] she was doing about it — she had even gone to Washington, she explained she had been teargassed — (laughs) she told me what teargassing felt like — felt like something I don't even want to go there, okay. Some other classmates also worked on presidential campaigns, in particular, Senator McCarthy's campaign.

[10:00]

Another meaningful experience for me was the timing of my Mundelein years. The events that occurred shortly before I started Mundelein and then shortly afterwards — beginning with the opening of Vatican II in October of 1962, the assassination of President John [Fitzgerald]

Kennedy in 1963, and ending with the Democratic National Convention in 1968. When I was at Mundelein and I was taking theology, the documents of Vatican II had literally come off the press and we studied them! We studied them and we discussed them and what the implications of these documents would be and that was in one of our theology courses. I still have my original books from that course which from time to time I do refer back on, because I find a reason to look at that stuff.

Those events, and all the events in between, are part of my formation as an independent woman. My family, Mundelein, and the BVMs also played a major part in that formation. In retrospect, I believe many of my Mundelein experiences were social in one way or another, even attending class. I mean, there was some social aspects about my being at Mundelein. I was the only student from my high school to attend Mundelein. I went to Mundelein without knowing anyone. One of my reasons was, I felt that when I would graduate from college, I might be in situations where I wouldn't know anyone, so how would I survive? Going to college not knowing anyone, I thought, would be a good education, a good laboratory for that experience.

I met Marge Sklencar, as I said early, at the Early Bird program picnic. Mary Kipp, another classmate, was in my Number Theory class in the Early Bird program. I moved into the dorm early on move-in day, simply because my parents, like I said earlier, had a restaurant and my mother had to open the restaurant at three o'clock. So she needed to get me up to Mundelein and get home in time to open the restaurant. So I moved in sometime in the morning — I can't remember what time. I met Darlene Puchalski shortly after I moved in because she too had

moved in earlier than I did. One by one, my roommates started moving in. My roommates freshman year were Audrey Adams, Chriss Kirchberger, Peggy Roth, Cathie Wegman. During Orientation Week, I met other classmates who lived in the Northland and Coffey Hall, also some commuter students during that week. Attending classes at campus events or just hanging around, I got to meet many wonderful students who became truly great women. So for that, I'm really grateful to my Mundelein experience. Anything else?

Q: That was fantastic, thank you so much for that overview! I have a few questions I wanted to further unpack. So, just to bring you back almost to the beginning of your overview actually, you were mentioning that you wanted a “full college experience” so where did you get that idea of a “full college experience” from?

Consola: (smiling) Well, watching television programs, watching movies of what people did on college. I never s— I never recall anyone actually sitting in the classroom. It wasn't until — I want to say maybe the early '70s — so I was already out of Mundelein — and I had gone to Northeastern University [in Boston] for an eleven-week seminar for actuarial science. And it was very intense. I remember the head of the program said he's going to use the Socratic method of instruction. I ask the questions, you the students supply the answers. Well, at that time, there was a movie out called “[The] Paper Chase”, about the experiences of a law — of a student at Harvard Law. And John Houseman was the professor and he said, I — we use the Socratic method! And that was really the first movie about college or higher education where I actually saw people in a classroom!

[15:00]

Everything before I went to Mundelein — it was like, oh, we are going to put on this big show or we got this big football game! I mean, it was all like fun, fun, fun, fun. And I thought, that's for me!

Q: That's fantastic, thank you so much about that. So, I also wanted to ask you a bit about your residential experience actually. Could you choose which hall you stayed in, or was it assigned to you?

Consola: Well, what happened was, freshman year I was going to be a five-day resident. I could have stayed in Coffey Hall as a five-day resident, but I was assigned to the Northland. And when I got there and I realized how great the Northland was — you know, the refrigerator in the room, the private bathroom — you didn't have to share it with your roommates — there was a telephone in the room — I thought, why would I leave! (smiles)

Q: That's fantastic. So, after you were assigned your freshman year, you could choose which dorm you wanted to stay in?

Consola: Yes.

Q: I see, that makes a lot of sense. And I also wanted to ask you a bit about the Big Sister program. So, how did you sign up to be one and can anyone sign up to be a Big Sister?

Consola: Anyone — I believe it was a junior or senior — could sign up to be a Big Sister.

Q: Okay.

Consola: Okay, so if you were a sophomore, you would be a junior the next year so you could sign up.

Q: I see.

Consola: That's about it. And what the school did, I believe, they looked at where you lived. So, for example, I lived in the southwest suburbs of Chicago, so they assigned me an incoming freshman who lived in one of the south suburbs of Chicago. Because the idea was that you would be together with your Little Sister before college starts, so you are not going to assign someone, say, someone who lives in Evanston a Little Sister who's in Joliet, Illinois.

Q: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. So, do you recall some memorable activities that you participated in as a Big Sister or that you did for your Little Sister?

Consola: Well, one of the things — I showed you my freshman beanie at the beginning — you had to wear that beanie on campus (emphasizes) all the time, you know. I forget how many weeks we had to wear the beanie. If you didn't wear the beanie, and you got caught not wearing your beanie, you had to go before the kangaroo court. And the kangaroo court would of course know you had been accused of, you know, not wearing your beanie. And even if you always wore your beanie, you could still get hauled before the kangaroo court. So you would get these different punishments. And I remember my freshman year, I and my roommates somehow got caught not — caught without our beanies and we had to sing the Mundelein song on Loyola's campus. And one of my friends — I think her boyfriend had bongo drums — so she [was] accompanying us with the bongo drums — and we sang the Mundelein song on the campus.

When I was a Big Sister, and one of my Little Sisters — I think I was — yeah, when I was a senior — she — we caught her without the beanie because she roomed with three seniors of whom — whom were my friends, okay. So of course they caught her without the beanie, she wasn't going to sleep with beanie! And I remember the punishment I gave her was to count so many things that were like in the carpet in the Northland. So I mean that's basically, you know, — some — that was one activity. And then I, you know, it was just to be a resource for your Little Sister — you know — questions about classes, should I take this professor versus that professor. Anything else?

Q: I — So, yeah, I'm just curious, for the kangaroo court, who forms the kangaroo court and what is the role of the —

Consola: The seniors.

Q: I see, okay.

Consola: I mean, remember these are freshman.

Q: Yeah. Oh man. Okay, so did you have a Big Sister yourself? And how was that experience of being a Little Sister like, compared to being a Big Sister?

Consola: I think to be a Big Sister was probably more fun, because I was more in control (both laugh).

[20:00]

Q: Yeah, like, some of those punishments would have been intense. So, did you —

Consola: Well, there might be other kinds of things that they would do. Maybe they would dare you to walk on the marble staircase. [The] marble staircase is that main staircase — you know, it's the staircase in the main entrance of the Skyscraper building? — and we couldn't walk on the marble staircase unless we were a senior and were wearing our caps and gowns and were lining up for formal assembly. Okay, so I mean — you just — you know, once in a while students were known to sometimes sneak up or down the marble staircase. And it depends on where you are

and where you might want to go, and maybe the marble staircase might just be a little more convenient than one of the other staircases that are in the stairwells.

Q: Yeah, and if you are rushing off for class, you would want to —

Consola: Yeah!

Q: That's rough.

Consola: I mean the elevators were awful! We only had two elevators that operated. Those were the two elevators that were like on the east side of where the elevator lobby is. Because they had offi — small offices where the other elevators are, now. And a lot of the times you come in — you know — you are on the first floor or you go down and you are in the basement and the elevators are already crowded and you think okay, I got a class on the fourth floor, I will just walk up. Or my classes are on the sixth floor, I will just walk up or I will — you know. You would just — you would just — you know — for a while, climbing six floors was nothing.

Q: Yeah, I see those lines still today actually when I walk past the Skyscraper and students will line up just to board the elevators. Yeah. I also wanted to ask you about sports at Mundelein. So you mentioned that you were part of the football team. Could you share about what some of your memorable games were? You mentioned the one with Loyola. Were there other memorable —

Consola: No, that was the only game we played.

Q: (laughs) Okay.

Consola: (laughs) That was the only — We only played one football game a year.

Q: Oh!

Consola: That was it.

Q: Was it for the intramural tournaments? Or is it a different —

Consola: No, no, no! We didn't even — we didn't even — it was just — it was just — we just played that one game. We did have some intramural, like, basketball or volleyball.

Q: Mhmm.

Consola: And I remember playing some of those games. We sometimes would have between student and faculty games like basketball or volleyball. But that was basically it.

Q: I see.

Consola: Some other physical ed [Education] classes that I didn't take — but like some of my roommates take — one was horseback riding.

Q: Hmm.

Consola: Another one of my friends took judo, okay, as a phys ed [physical education] class. I mean, swimming was one. First aid was another class. I took first aid, I learnt how to wrap an ankle if someone sprained their ankle, okay. I learnt how to treat people for shock. You immobilize the patient, you know. So they don't move around!

Q: Yep.

Consola: But I mean that was it. We didn't get credit for phys ed but we had to take it.

Q: Right, I see. So you shared about some sports like horseback riding and judo, do you recall what were some of the more popular sports during your time at Mundelein?

Consola: It's really hard to say because no one — because if you wanted to say you took a class called "Team Sports" — which I did — there would be people from other classes there. I mean

— it just — there really weren't that — weren't — Mundelein did not have emphasis on sports. Kind of reminded me when I went to Northwestern for my Master's. They kept saying that Northwestern does not turn out athletes. That was before Northwestern's football team started winning games, okay (laughs). But at Mundelein just really — there weren't — as far as women sports were, there really wasn't a big emphasis on women sports, it was more men's sports. I mean, for example, Loyola won the NCAA [National Collegiate Athletic Association] basketball tournament in 1963 — which was the year before I started Mundelein — and they milked that for all they could get out of it. Across their old gym — which now has been torn down — they had a big sign Loyola, you know, "NCAA Basketball Champions 1963". That was there for my whole four years of Mundelein and I don't know how long afterwards. So, at that time you have to realize that — you know — as far as women sports — it just was not a big thing. Didn't have any really professional women's teams, I don't think.

[25:00]

Q: That's very useful knowledge to know. I have been wondering about sports at Mundelein because I was doing some research about sports at Loyola, but I'm glad you got to play in a game during your time there. And let's see, I also wanted to ask what — do you recall what movies and books were popular when you were at college?

Consola: Ah! I could — I could — I have a list!

Q: Ah, okay!

Consola: And I can tell you where you can find the list!

Q: Fantastic!

Consola: (holds up 1968 yearbook)

Q: Oh, okay!

Consola: (flips through book and holds it to computer's pinhole) The editor of this book, these two pages —

Q: Oh!

Consola: You can get a list — she's even got on here the bestsellers — from — this is 1968. Okay. One of the movies I remember was popular — I think in 19 — summer of 1967 — was "The Graduate". My friend Paddy Watterlohn and I fell in love with the movie. We must have seen it about nine times before we graduated from Mundelein. And it was our mission to bring every senior to that movie, okay. So that was one movie that we saw.

Another movie — I remember we saw the movie — is “Paris Burning”. That was in January of ’67 and I had read the book the summer before and that deals with the last days of the Nazi occupation of Paris during World War Two and how Hitler had ordered that the city be burned. So that was one movie we saw.

Another movie we saw was — it’s a French movie — “A Man and A Woman”. So, and — books — well, you can look in that because this is online — so you can easily look through it. There was — “Rosemary’s Baby” was a book, “Valley of the Dolls” was another book that was popular.

Q: Yeah, I will check out that list. I briefly saw it when I was going through the thing, but it’s so nice that you watched “The Graduate” about nine times. So, were the main movie theaters you were going to the Granada Theater and The 400 that you mentioned?

Consola: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

Consola: Yeah, and you know, sometimes, it depends like — you know — the summer of '67, couple of us took a summer course at DePaul. And I didn't have a job — I didn't have a summer job other than working at my parents' restaurant. And I think Paddy had a job. But hers was always late in the day. So, sometimes we would go to the movies downtown. Sometimes, we would go to the [Chicago] Art Institute — it was free all days, then. We would find a nice quiet place in the Art Institute — preferably one by a fountain — and we would take off our shoes and put our feet in the fountain (laughs) and we would go over what were the class that we had.

Q: That sounds really nice, particularly in summer.

Consola: Mhmm.

Q: So, I also wanted to ask you a bit about — more about Class Day. So you mentioned that there were themes for different Class Days and then you dressed up that one time as Snow White, five dwarves, evil stepmother. Were there any other traditions for Class Days, apart from dressing up for that theme?

Consola: No, basically, each class would have their theme and they would dress up according to whatever that theme was. And again, you can actually — if you go through my senior yearbook, (holds yearbook up) there are pictures from our Class Days. One of my classmates, Judy Innis, dressed up as a Girl Scout. So, I mean — basically — students dressed up with whatever they

could find in the dorm, or if they were a commuter, whatever they could find at home, you know. And then also, for our different skits, we had to put on costumes, okay. I remember my sophomore year — that was the year Mundelein transitioned from the semester system to the trimester system. And basically, it was structured that you took ten courses each year. And you could take four courses the first term, three-and-three, or do three-four-and-three or three-three-and-four.

[30:00]

I always liked to do four, three and three, and get them out of the way as soon as I could. And, the theme around campus was, “In your spare time, read”. Because it seemed like a lot of the professors and teachers felt students, instead of taking six or seven classes, they are taking at the most four course[s] — classes, so they have all this extra time to read. But the difference was, instead of taking these classes over a period of about sixteen weeks, you are doing them over eleven weeks. So, I mean, you have a much shorter time, it’s much more intense. And it would be nothing to have like, maybe two thousand pages of reading a week depending on what classes you were taking. So that became the joke, “In your spare time, read”.

So my class skit was called “The Three Faces — The Three Faces of Eve”. But it was actually “The Three Faces of Red” is what we called it. And I remember we had like three different short little skits. And the one — it was a Greek chorus, okay. And I was part of the Greek chorus. So our costumes were bedsheets that we had to dye purple. So that meant people had to hold out one of their sheets from their linens (laughs) so that they could dye it purple, okay. Another one was sort of — you know — basically, we told the story of “Little Red Riding Hood”, first as a Greek

chorus, a Greek tragedy, the second one was as a Shakespearean tragedy and the third one was as a James Bond. James Bond was very popular when I was in college.

Q: That sounds so interesting and so fun. So, to jump back a bit about your jobs — I was very intrigued to learn that you took up a job typing things because you mentioned at the start of the interview that —

Consola: (laughs) I know, yes.

Q: — that you didn't want to type things! So what made you take up that job, and how did you come to know about those jobs in the first place?

Consola: Well, I took typing in high school. So I learnt how to type. My mother insisted that all of us take typing while we were in high school. My two sisters took typing when they were in summer school in high school. I remember my brother took typing in high school as well, because my mother told him, "You are going to have to type papers!" And he was glad he did because he used to type papers for girls. It was one way he was able to (laughs), you know, get dates, right, when he was in college, right. So, I took typing in high school. And, that was basically a skill I had and I still have that skill. And what happened was — I'm trying to think what office it was — there was someone in the administration, they had campus jobs. You could kind of see what campus jobs were available, they are called "Work Study". And what it was —

you could work up to — I think it was ten hours a week? — there was some limit, wasn't twenty, so might have been ten hours a week. And you reported your time on a timecard. And then, and then, you would be paid. I forget what our pay was, I really forgot what we got paid. It gave basically — for me, it gave me a little extra spending money, you know — a little extra money to go down to 31 Flavors or go to the movie. So that's how I found out about the job.

So then — you know, I guess — Sister Joretta — I met with Sister Joretta, I talked to her and she asked me, you know, questions. And what I had to type for her — it wasn't like I was typing papers. Maybe it was index cards. Maybe it was just short things. Maybe it might have been a class syllabus that she needed to have run off on the mimeograph. So that's really how I got the job. There was — there was like — I forget who — how — you know, which office it was in administration that had the jobs posted. Like I said, some students worked in the bookstore, some students ran the elevators, some students worked in the library, some students even worked probably in the cafeteria. So I certainly didn't want to work in anything dealing with food since I had a rest — family restaurant. That was the last thing I wanted.

[35:00]

Q: That's fair and I'm — I'm glad the things that you had to type were short things.

Consola: Oh, I was too.

Q: Yeah, so was that the thing for Dr. Michael Fortune as well? You mentioned that he became the head of the English department, so did you type similar things for him or were there additional duties that were —?

Consola: It was similar things. Maybe at the beginning of the year it was the class syllabus, as an example. Maybe he's giving a quiz so I would type the quiz. He's giving a test. So it would be just different things that I would type. So it would be whatever, you know, the professors or, you know, Dr. Fortune would need typed. Now, there were — I think there was a room where there were typewriters available — or maybe Sister Joretta might have had one in her room — but I had a typewriter in my room. Some of the stuff I could take back to the dorm and type in my room. I didn't have to physically be in the office, but I needed to track, keep track of my time.

Q: That's really good to know. So I have one last question — you mentioned that one of your classmates — actually several of your classmates — were involved in the Selma March. I was wondering if you were involved in any of those activist efforts or whether you recalled any particular activist efforts at Mundelein.

Consola: I really wasn't involved in those activities as much. I wasn't the first person in my extended family to go to college, but I was the first one to graduate from college. I have two cousins who are old — a little couple years older — than I am that went to college and they both dropped out of college, they got married, one went into the army but they both went back and finished college. And my father didn't go to high school. He started high school, but he had to

drop out of high school to help support the family. So to explain to him why he's paying my tuition, my room and board for me to go off somewhere, I think I would have had a hard time explaining why. And I, I — that was something I didn't want to cross, I didn't want to cross that bridge, so to speak.

Q: Thank you for letting me know. I really learnt a lot from all that you have shared and thank you for taking the time to compile these notes. So that's all the questions I have on my end, but is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to share about student life at Mundelein?

Consola: Other than that I think it was a very interesting time to be at Mundelein. One of — I had mentioned earlier about Vatican II and one of the big changes at Mundelein [after] Vatican II was the BVMS — many of them — came out of their habits. Not only did they come out of their habit, they went back to their baptismal names. So you are on campus and you see a face, and you think, "I know that face! But who is she?" You couldn't a lot of times remember their names, okay. The other thing too was about — you know, the whole thing about Vatican II — being on campus — we were right next door to Loyola. So many times, go over to Loyola for mass. And they had guitar masses, and they were extremely lively masses compared to the Latin masses.

Q: Hmmm.

Consola: Where you really didn't understand the mumbling.

Q: Yeah, that's so interesting. I was reading about Vatican II recently and all the changes so I'm so glad you talked about that for this last part. Okay, is there anything else you would like to share?

Consola: No, not really. I mean it — just that — I mean for me, it was a great experience and the thing that I'm always amazed — I send Christmas cards. And I send all my — sent Christmas cards to, you know, at least for my freshman year at Mundelein. And some of the people on my Christmas card list have been on my Christmas card list since my freshman year at Mundelein. So I think the fact that I was able to establish these relationships and then maintain them all these years — first of all, I think it speaks a lot about the experience of Mundelein because even when I have been in — on different places and I wear my Mundelein ring, it gets recognized.

[40:00]

I can remember sitting in an airport in one of the islands of Bahamas — I can't remember which island it was — it was a flight that I had to connect through Miami. I made the flight, but my luggage didn't. So I'm sitting (laughs), you know, waiting for my luggage, you know, filling out the paperwork and I'm just sitting there. And then someone — a woman — comes up to me and she says, "Is that a Mundelein ring?" And she and her sister had both gone to Mundelein, okay.

Another time, I went to the local bakery in Orland Park to pick up an order. And I'm paying for it and someone came up to me and said, "And when did you graduate from Mundelein?" My ring

was recognized! Another time, I went to a function — like a breakfast talk — you know, and I'm getting some materials, and someone came up to me and said, "And when did (emphasizes) you graduate from Mundelein?". At that same talk, I'm sitting at the table, and a woman comes over and she says, "May we join you?" and I said, "Sure!" And guess what she has? (displays class ring to the camera) So her name was Eileen and I said to her— I said, "Eileen, is that by any chance, a Mundelein ring², a college ring?" — I said. And she's, "Oh yes, by the way —" and she starts (mimes pulling ring off finger). And I said, "Don't bother, I have one here just like it." (displays class ring to the camera). I mean — and we have run into each other at different functions, and we have even had lunch together. She graduated from Mundelein in '62, so a few years before I did. So I think, you know, the fact that there are a lot of us out there says a lot about, you know, what the BVMs accomplished.

Q: That's such a great story. Thank you so much for your time, Mary. So I will be stopping the recording here, and we can talk a bit about the next steps that will occur.

[END OF RECORDING]

² The interviewee has struck out "a Mundelein ring" in the transcript review. It has been retained in this transcript to for consistency with the recording.