

SHARE YOUR STORY: STUDENT LIFE AT MUNDELEIN

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Sybil Malinowski Melody's Oral History

Women and Leadership Archives

Loyola University Chicago

2020

PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Sybil Malinowski Melody conducted by Scarlett Andes on August 12, 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. Actions and sounds such as laughter are in parentheses and notes added for context are in brackets.

NARRATOR BIO

Sybil Malinowski Melody (née Malinowski) was born and raised in Chicago and attended Cathedral High School. After high school, in 1966 she enrolled in Mundelein College, where she pursued the Social Sciences Concentration. Throughout high school and until her junior year of college, she worked at Allied Radio in downtown Chicago, following which she worked full time for the summer of 1969 moving books into Mundelein's new Learning Resource Center (currently the Loyola Sullivan Center). She also worked for several months at a phone company during her senior year before leaving for a study abroad program in Switzerland. She left partway through the program and completed her final degree requirements at Mundelein in 1972. She considers herself a member of the class of 1970, with whom she entered Mundelein.

After graduation, Sybil Malinowski Melody attended and graduated from law school and led a successful career as an attorney. She is now retired and resides in Clarkdale, Arizona. She attributes her appreciation of art and music to Mundelein's core curriculum that was pioneered around the time she began as a student, along with many other elements of her Mundelein experience. Nowadays, she supports local artists and helped to save her local library from closure, and has been involved in her local synagogue.

INTERVIEWER BIO

Scarlett Andes is a graduate student in the Public History Master's program at Loyola University Chicago and is a Sesquicentennial Scholar at the WLA, working on projects to mark Loyola's 150th anniversary. She grew up in Vernon Hills, Illinois and has a bachelor's degree in anthropology.

TIME LOG AND OVERVIEW

[0:00 – 5:00]: Introduction, family, choosing Mundelein for college, Melody's sister attending Mundelein, studying sociology, the social science concentration

[5:00 – 10:00]: The social science concentration, the core curriculum, most impactful Mundelein classes, art appreciation, the swimming requirement

[10:00 – 15:00]: Swimming, social sciences classes, Professor Dr. Russel Barta, psychology classes, Dr. Irene Meyer, internship at Chicago State Mental Hospital

[15:00 – 20:00]: Internship continued, insight into changing mental health treatments and policies, Professor Bill Hill

[20:00 – 25:00]: Professor Bill Hill, theology and philosophy classes, study abroad in Switzerland, Rose Marie Moranto Anichini, leaving study abroad early

[25:00 – 30:00]: Leaving study abroad early, making mistakes, commuting to Mundelein, commuting compared to dorm life, commuter lockers, playing pinocle in the commuter lounge

[30:00 – 35:00]: Working for Allied Radio, burger joints near Mundelein, working during the summer of 1969 transferring books to Mundelein's new Learning Resource Center

[35:00 – 40:00]: Transferring books continued, working for Illinois Bell Telephone as an operator, changes in technology, Melody's mother's childhood in central Wisconsin without plumbing or electricity

[40:00 – 45:00]: Changes in technology, Mundelein's language labs, world events during Melody's time at Mundelein, The British Invasion, Simon and Garfunkel concert at Mundelein (Fall 1966), listening to new albums in the dorms, The Civil Rights Movement, BVMs at Mundelein approaching activism, the Anti-War (or Peace) Movement, drugs

[45:00 – 50:00]: Dress code changes at Mundelein, youth movements worldwide, The Cultural Revolution in China, Melody's Honors Convocation 1966 program and opting to sit in the balcony rather than participate

[50:00 – 55:00]: Sitting in the balcony continued, 1970 class reactions to nuns' reasoning, origins of the Women's Movement, being at a women's school during the Women's Movement

[55:00 – 1:00:00]: 1968 as a pivotal year worldwide, Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination and riots in Chicago, RFK assassination, Democratic National Convention, Anti-Vietnam War

symposium at Mundelein, Ann Matasar, the New Church Mass at the Religious Education Center

[1:00:00 – 1:05:00]: The Religious Education Center, participatory mass, the end of the Skyscraper student newspaper, not being involved in student groups

[1:05:00 – 1:10:00]: Atmosphere at activist events at Mundelein, staying in touch with friends from Mundelein, attending events at Mundelein after graduating, William Ferris appearance at Mundelein

[1:10:00 – 1:15:00]: Loyola's uses of the Skyscraper building, the Gannon Center, Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Mundelein affiliation with Loyola in 1991, relationship with Loyola while a student at Mundelein,

[1:15:00 – 1:20:00]: Preserving the spirit of Mundelein, interactions with Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, reorganization of Mundelein in the 1960s, spending time in the Tea Room and Learning Resource Center

[1:20:00 – 1:25:00]: Loyola's student union, Father Robert (?) Fox, SJ, the Mundelein experience, literary references, class on Albert Camus, law school

[1:25:00 – 1:30:00]: Law school, career in law, involvement in nonprofits, no longer being Catholic, studying Buddhism and Taoism, learning about and converting to Judaism

[1:30:00 – 1:32:12]: Melody's synagogue in the Sedona, Arizona area, ultimate questions about why we are here, changing the world

Transcriptionist: Scarlett Andes

Session: 1/1

Interviewee: Marge (Marguerite) Phillips
Britton

Locations: Chicago, IL and Vernon Hills, IL
via Zoom

Interviewer: Scarlett Andes

Date: July 15, 2020

[BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW]

[0:00]

Q: Alright, so we are recording! I have a couple things to state for the record. My name is Scarlett Andes, I am a Sesquicentennial Scholar at the Women and Leadership Archives. I am interviewing Sybil Melody Malinowski—did I pronounce that right?

Melody: Well, usually the Malinowski then the Melody. (laughs)

Q: Oh! Sorry. Okay, Sybil Malinowski Melody, on August 12th, 2020. I am in Chicago—well, technically Vernon Hills, Illinois, and Sybil is in—

Melody: Clarkdale, Arizona.

Q: Fabulous. Alright. To start us off, could you tell me a little bit about yourself and your family, like where you were born and where you were raised?

Melody: I was born and raised in Chicago. All four of my grandparents were born in Poland, so my parents were the first generation born in the United States, and my dad was born and raised in Chicago, and my mom in central Wisconsin and moved down to Chicago to get a job and met my dad. I have four siblings. I have a sister and three brothers. And my sister, who is older—the oldest—went to Mundelein College, which is how I heard about Mundelein. (laughs) So that's sort of my basic background.

Q: Okay. And so, how did you choose to go to Mundelein? 'Cause we don't all go to the same schools as our siblings.

Melody: Well, I guess there were a couple of things. I went to Chicago Public Schools for elementary school—three of my siblings and I went to the same school which was basically across the street from where we lived. And my youngest brother went to a Catholic school. But again, the three older kids went to Cathedral High School, which is a BVM high school [run by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary], so my experiences with the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary were very—overall, fabulous. I mean, you know, lots of—always good nun stories, but it really was a wonderful school. And one of the cool things about that school, at least back in the sixties, was that it was a coed school, and there were not many coed Catholic schools at the time. So that was, I think a good experience. So when it came time—you

know, my sister had gone to Mundelein. She actually went to Mundelein for her last two years—her first two years she went to a junior college and then transferred to Mundelein. She really liked it. I went up there a few times. It was, like, beautiful. And so in terms of being attracted to a school run by the BVMs, and I kind of knew, in a way—I mean most of my friends went to University of Illinois Circle Campus, and then of course a few in my high school class—we had one who got an appointment to the Air Force Academy, and—I forget—a few other kids who did well. But I kind of thought in terms of school size that I would do better off at a smaller school than at UIC [University of Illinois at Circle]. And I mean, those were really sort of my choices in many ways. I mean, I could have gone to DePaul or Loyola or some of the other schools, but it just seemed like if I wasn't going to go to UIC, going to a nice small school—and I wasn't at all concerned about it being a girls' school. I mean, it seemed like my sister liked it. And that seemed like fun at the time. So that was my Mundelein.

Q: And did you go in studying sociology?

Melody: Yeah, I pretty much decided early on that I wanted to study sociology. And at that time—now I'm just trying to remember, as I was preparing for this, whether 1966 was the year that—I kind of think that was the year the new curriculum was rolled out. It might have been the year before, but I think it was in '66. So, what happened at that time was—for at least in the social sciences—I did what was called the social science concentration. Many other kids had majors and minors, depending on the topic, but in the social sciences it was a concentration, because you had to take classes across—you picked a specialty in that area and you had to take the most classes in that.

[5:00]

So you had to take sociology, psychology, economics, and political science. You had to take at least once class in each of those topics, those subjects, because that was part of the social science curriculum. And then you also needed to take statistics, because that was considered part of the social science curriculum.

So I didn't have a minor. I had a broader major. Again, I thought it was an interesting way to do it and I liked it. And that didn't mean I didn't have to take a language, for example. You still had to take a language. Again, that was the roll-out, I'm pretty sure that year, of their core curriculum requirements. And so half of your classes were basically—well they weren't necessarily all specifically required classes, but in terms of subject matters. You had—some of them were required classes and others you had to take a class in that subject. But you had to take classes across spectrum. So you got sciences—hard sciences—arts, and literature, and philosophy, of course, and theology and the whole shebang.

Q: Mm-hm. Yeah 'cause when we talked last week, you mentioned the core curriculum and the impact it had on you. So, what kind of classes—what were the classes that you liked the most?

Melody: Well, I think that classes—Looking back, there were some that I—there weren't any that I didn't like. But in terms of having an impact on my life, I thought the two classes in that curriculum that had the biggest impact were the art appreciation class and the music appreciation class. Probably, if I had not been required to take those classes, I don't know whether I would have taken one or both of them, just because I think at that time there was such a focus on the

political issues, and things going on in the country, the Civil Rights Movement into the Anti-War Movement into the Women's Movement. All that was going on at the time. So, it might have been in my mind, you know, why would you take an art class or a music class? And those two classes, I think, gave me a foundation to understand and appreciate and feel comfortable—I don't know if you can see in the background, but I have art all over my house [several framed artworks hang on the wall behind Melody]. And I am a patron of the arts, in a certain sense. Not expensive art, but local artists and things like that. And when I go somewhere, I will buy a piece of art. That will be my memento of where I've been, traveled around the world, or whatever. And the same thing with music—I really think I have a broad appreciation of music. So that would not have, I think—my life would have been different had I not had just that one class that gave me a different viewpoint and depth about music that I wouldn't have otherwise. (laughs)

Q: So, let's see. You also mentioned the swimming requirement.

Melody: (laughs) Well that's the—that's been always sort of the joke in my talking about Mundelein because at the time, I think Mundelein was—in the sixties it was moving from being more of a finishing school for young ladies to becoming a real academic force. But one of the things the core curriculum—they sort of joked about was, well, the idea of the core curriculum was to create a well-rounded woman. And my joke was, "Well, a well-rounded woman has to know how to swim." So, you had to take a swimming class unless you had a doctor's excuse. So that was part of the curriculum, you know. You just shouldn't be afraid of the water, or whatever!

[10:00]

So I really did learn how to swim in that swimming class. I mean, I had certainly gone in swim pools and stuff like that, but I had never taken a swimming class, so I got a lot better in the water because of that.

Q: Very cool. Let me see—back to your concentration. So the classes you took for the social sciences—could you tell me a bit about those?

Melody: How would I start? Well, I really—my focus, I forget the term they used, my specialization was sociology. So that was the area that I took the most classes in. And it really was a fascinating time to be studying sociology, from my perspective, because there was so much social change going on. And so my senior thesis was actually on the Women's Movement, and I forget exactly the title of my paper but it was something like "Working Class Women in the Women's Movement." And so it was looking at that topic, because I—looking at it in terms of class, which would be a sociological issue, and sort of looking at that issue from a class perspective. I had great teachers; the head of the sociology department was Professor Doctor Russel Barta, and he was a really good teacher. I remember classes. I'm not sure I remember completely everything that was said in the class fifty years ago, but I can still think of him talking about Emile Durkheim or some of the founders of certain areas of social science and social science thought. And it was interesting too, because initially I took the classes kind of because I wanted to be a (holds up air quotes) "social worker." And social work and sociology are two very different topics. Not that there's no relationship between the two, but they're very

different. And so, learning more about sociology I thought was very interesting. I really liked the psychology classes. That was my next largest number of classes in the social science concentration. I remember Dr. Irene Meyer, and I had at least two classes with her, and I think, then, another professor whose name I don't remember. And she was really—again, some of these professors were just absolutely fabulous. And learning about behavioral psychology and other theories of psychology, The Skinner Box [an enclosed apparatus used to study animal behavior], and other things like that that are kind of classic psychology experiments, and how we try to understand the psyche, and that sort of thing. And then the other experience that was really profound, from my psychology classes—I don't remember if it was actually required or recommended at this point, but the school arranged for people to do an—they called it like an internship. We went to—but anyway, I went out to Chicago State Mental Hospital, which was out on the west side of Chicago. And you were there a certain amount of hours and all that, and they made arrangements for, basically, just to go hang out in a mental institution and to see what was going on. I was assigned to the rehabilitation center, which was a unit in this facility which had been, up to that time, sort of a long-term mental hospital slash hellhole. (laughs) I mean, in many ways. Not that the people were necessarily intending to treat people badly, but it was just that the level of treatment, and what would happen is they would just park people there and they would spend, generally, the rest of their life—once in a while people got out, but mostly once you got in, you rarely got out, and you'd be there for twenty, thirty years. So the rehab unit was designed to help long-term patients prepare for being released out into halfway houses and released out into the community.

[15:00]

Because there were people who hadn't taken a bus or an El train, or hadn't gone into the grocery store to buy themselves food, or to buy a pair of shoes. Or had no real experience in terms of—they had been taken care of for twenty years, or twenty-five years or something. So they had to relearn those kind of social skills—those kind of socioeconomic skills. And so I got to meet with some of the patients and some of the staff working with them. And it was really quite—And one of the interesting things that they told me was the staff suggested that I read some of the files of some of the patients. And that was kind of fascinating, particularly—one of the files was someone who was a paranoid schizophrenic, who wrote the most convincing and, in a sense, accurate letters about how she was being held against her will. (laughs) “And please,” I mean, it was quite—I mean, she was being held against her will in the sense that she was committed, but she would write these letters, and it was—they're very eloquent, well-written, and you immediately think, “Oh my god, can I help this poor person who has been kidnapped?” So, very fascinating.

So that was, again, I think a very real interesting experience in terms of understanding the transition and what happened at that time. There was whole movement in the country and in the social sciences to move people out of these residential holding pens—to move them into the community. And the concept was that they would get treatment in the community, they would be integrated into the community, they would have healthier mental health outcomes. I think in the long run, looking back at it, unfortunately, it hasn't worked out that well. In terms of people actually—I mean, it's hard to say. In terms of percentages, we obviously know a lot of homeless people in this country are people with mental health problems. And under other circumstances, they would be taken care of in a facility designed that way versus being on the street. So it's just—it's just hard to know. It seems like maybe the idea was a good idea but the execution

wasn't thought out well enough to really ultimately take care of the people who needed to be taken care of. I mean, better than giving them electro-shock therapy and all that.

Q: (laughs) Yeah. Yes.

Melody: I mean, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"—that was a good thing not to do. But it seems to me there should have been something between throwing them out on the streets to be homeless and locking them up and holding them for the rest of their lives. So there should be some other—something different. We haven't quite figured out how to do it in this country (laughs). That's my evaluation.

Q: That's such an interesting thing to be involved with as a college student.

Melody: Yeah, I mean, that's it. When people talk about these issues, I can say, "Well, I was there at the time when this was changing. And I saw it as a college student. And that was a Mundelein opportunity, and again, it was through the head of the department. I mean, Meyer was the one who would bring these experiences. And I don't know that I helped the staff in any way. I think it was totally for my benefit rather than help them very much, but it was a very interesting experience.

Q: Let's see. In terms of professors, you also mentioned Professor Bill Hill being inspirational. What did he teach?

Melody: Theology. Actually, I think theology and philosophy. He was an ex-Jesuit. I don't remember whether he had gotten as far as being ordained. But he had been in the Jesuit order for a number—several years, and then left the Jesuits. And then got married—married a nun, an ex-nun.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: Not that she wasn't [inaudible]. And they had like—good Catholics—they had like eight or nine kids. They were just a very delightful couple. Well, anyway, that was quite—I got to know them a little bit, socially.

[20:00]

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: But he was [inspirational]. He had that Jesuit background of training and brought that depth to teaching. And I think people—I don't think I was the only one, I think he was a very popular professor and people really were drawn to him. He had a very charismatic way about

him. And again, talking about those subjects that were—they weren't practical in the sense—and in that sense very foundational, the bigger questions of life. Why are we here, and what is our relationship to the divine? You know? Those kinds of things. The ultimate questions that as you get older, like I am now, ultimately, why am I here and what am I going to do with my life? You know, that was a good thing to be exploring when you're in college. And if you're at least, not thinking about that, and underneath it all, having it as a background. But those are the—I don't know. To me, I was very glad to have someone, a professor, like Professor Hill. And I don't remember exactly how many classes I had with him, but I think three, maybe even four. 'Cause I know the very last class that I took at Mundelein was with Professor Hill. I was able to—I had to take one more class to get my degree and I was looking and I went, "Oh, I could do this!" And this was wonderful. It was a great way to go out. To finish up.

Q: Mm-hm. So let's see. Also toward the end of your time at Mundelein, you did study abroad, right?

Melody: Yes. What happened was, I have a friend—she's still my friend. At that time, her name was Rose Marie Maranto and she married Silvio Anichini, so her name is Rose Marie Anichini. But Rose Marie had gone to the Rome Center, Loyola's Rome Center, in her junior year, and you would think that would be enough travels, but it wasn't. She decided that she wanted to do this language program which was offered—Mundelein was able to offer it through Michigan State University, I believe, was the American school sponsoring it. And so it was the last trimester of my senior year was going to be spent in Lausanne, Switzerland and studying French. So if Rose

Marie went, I said, “I want to do it, I want to go to Europe, everybody wants to go to Europe. I want to do it!” As an excuse. So I had an Illinois state scholarship through four years and I don’t remember now whether that scholarship—I think it actually would have applied to my Mundelein credits, cause ultimately it would have gone through Michigan State and been treated as Mundelein credits. But any of that, I don’t remember the whole paying for it and all that. But I did go for this term to Lausanne, Switzerland to study French, but unlike Rose Marie, who had taken a couple French classes, I had not taken any French classes at all. So I knew how to say “*Bonjour*” and that was, you know, pretty much— “*merci*” and a few words. But very little. So, it was very interesting to be immersed in this culture where there was not English being spoken. I was housed with—the students were housed with local people who would take in boarders. So, the lady I lived with spoke German and French, *nada* English (laughs). But she had another boarder beside myself who spoke German and English—not decent, her English got a lot better before I left, but it was a nice experience. And what I didn’t do was finish the class. So that’s sort of a personal story. My then-boyfriend called halfway through the school term and said, “I can’t live without you. Come back.” So, I was mad, you know, I was mad—let’s leave it at that (laughs).

[25:00]

I thought I was madly in love, it seemed like a good idea. Anyway, I went back, didn’t finish the term, and we got married and did not live happily ever after (laughs). That marriage only lasted a couple of years. But it still was a wonderful opportunity that Mundelein offered. And it was an interesting experience. Again, to be in Europe and living with the local people and traveling around, as an educational experience it was wonderful. And I just kind of screwed it up a little bit (laughs).

Q: Aw (laughs).

Melody: By not finishing—but it was, again, looking back, what I’ve learned is that it’s sort of—there’s an Edith Piaf—I don’t know if you’ve ever heard of her, of the singer Edith Piaf—but she had a song she was very famous for, a French song, “*Non--*” anyway, something-- “I regret nothing.” [Editor’s note: “*Non, je ne regrette rien*” sung by Edith Piaf] And, I mean, I certainly regret hurting people’s feelings or harmed anybody, but in terms of making what seemed to be mistakes at the time, that’s how you learn. And if you don’t make mistakes, you’ll never learn anything, so lots of things that seem inappropriate, like, you know, “Oh my goodness, how could I have been so foolish?” That’s where I was at the time, so.

Q: Absolutely. And I love that song, by the way. (both laugh) Let’s see—ah. While you were at Mundelein, you said you commuted to school.

Melody: I was—unlike—I don’t remember the ratio, whether it was fifty-fifty or I’m kind of getting the sense it was forty-sixty, maybe like sixty percent residential, forty percent commuter, or something like that. But I was—the first two years of school, I commuted from my parents’ house. So I lived at home and took the El, you know, up to the Loyola stop. So it would take me about an hour each way to get to school on the El. And the last two years, I wasn’t in a dorm. I rented an apartment, a studio apartment up on Devon Avenue, just west of Broadway. And so I

never was—I never participated in dorm life, other than when I'd hang out in the dorms with my friends a little bit. But I didn't—you know, I never stayed there overnight, I never had to deal with dorm rules or the kinds of thing that—especially early on—I think the dorms, for example, when Northland was a dorm, which had been an apartment building converted into this dorm, it had certain features that made it okay as a dorm and other things made it weird as a dorm and things like that. So.

But in any event, there were good points and bad points. Basically, the commuter students mostly hung out in the lower lounge in the lower level of the Skyscraper, but we all had lockers. We all were assigned a locker. I don't know that the resident students had lockers, only the commuters. I'm kind of thinking it was only the commuters that had lockers so that we had a place to put our books and coats in the wintertime. And our cap and gown were supposed to be there so that we could, you know, those formal assemblies we could wear our cap and gown or whatever. So anyway, the lounge was the place where you could eat snacks and study and play pinochle. That's one of the things that I did. You asked about activities at Mundelein—well, I learned how to play pinochle. That was a good thing and a bad thing (laughs).

Q: What is a very popular game at Mundelein?

Melody: I don't know—you know, I can't say. Among the commuter students who hung out down in the lounge, yes. It was not unusual—well, not so much during the middle of the day, but sort of late afternoon or into the evening, you could often find a pinochle game going, so (both laugh). I think it was relatively popular.

[30:00]

Q: Mm-hm. Let's see—so outside of Mundelein, where did you and your peers go, like, for fun?

Melody: Well, it's interesting, 'cause when I was looking at your general topic list, because I was also—I worked twenty hours a week, and not that close to Mundelein—I worked down on the Rush Street area at Allied Radio. I don't know if you ever heard that name, but if you remember Radio Shack? So the precursor to Radio Shack was a company called Allied Radio, headquartered in Chicago on Western and Washington. And so I actually was working—that's right, I was working on Western and Washington for the first year of Mundelein because, I worked there from my junior year of high school to the end of my third year of college. And I worked, during the school year, I worked twenty hours a week. And during the summer, they would give me forty hours. Or roughly forty hours. So I worked full time in the summer. So between travel and working, I can't say that there was, you know, a lot of going around, hanging around places. But I, you know, did—Hamilton's was one of the hangouts that people would go to. My junior, senior year, when I was living up by the school. And then the other place where we kind of hung out was Sir Whoopee's, this hamburger joint. And it's sort of funny, in the 1970 yearbook, I looked and Sir Whoopee's was one of the patrons or sponsors for the yearbook. But it was the hamburger joint that was dressed up to look like a little bit of a castle. And they had this big knight-in-armor figure outside, a stylized sort of thing. And so that was a sort of place to go for a hamburger or whatever and sit and have a Coke and talk. I can't say that there were, you

know, a lot other places that I went because I was pretty busy going between classes and working and whatever (both laugh).

Q: On the topic of working, then, you did mention some jobs at Mundelein that you had.

Melody: Right. Well, so I mentioned that I had worked at Allied Radio through the end of my junior year. And then the summer of—I don't know why I decided, but I had contacted the school office about employment, and they said that they would be able to get me a full-time summer job. So I decided at that point to quit Allied Radio. So for the summer of '69, I was hired by the school, and they must have gotten special funding for this. But I was part of a team of kids who moved the library, which had been in what is now the Gannon Center, into what is—I don't know what the building is, if it's still called the Learning Resource Center or if it's even still there, actually. I think it is. But so they had this brand new—now it's fifty-one years old, (laughs) but then it was brand new—new building that was going to be the library and have a language laboratory with some audio setups and would have an auditorium and other—for various events. And anyway, so, I was part of the crew that moved books and bookshelves from the Gannon Center into the Learning Resource Center all summer long. So that, you know, it was just a lot of fun. You know, we were totally irreverent and making jokes 'cause nobody cared what we did as long as we got the work done in a reasonable amount of time.

[35:00]

It's funny 'cause I don't know if I remember the names of any of these girls that did it. But all I can say is it was a blast and I had a good time. It was very different from mental work in any

way, you know, it was just—it was really kind of physical. That's what allowed us to be really silly.

So then at the end of that summer, I had to get a job because I had to have money to pay my rent, so Mundelein placed me, again, their placement office got me a job with Illinois Bell Telephone. And I was an operator. I was a long-distance operator, back in the days when there were cord boards. So you picked up a call, you had the headset on and all this, and you plugged in a cord, and you said—well, depending on what you were answering, 'cause I could answer long-distance calls and—or calls that were coming in that were just operator calls. So I'd plug in and say, "Long distance?" And then someone would tell you what they wanted, and you'd put their call through, and you'd take another cord connected to that and plug it in somewhere, and connect these calls. 'Cause people could not at that time make a long-distance call from—they couldn't call out of their area code from their own home phones or business phones. And I did that until I went to Lausanne, Switzerland in the spring. So I did that for about nine months. And that was a rather interesting experience. And I got the job through Mundelein. And again, I was working about twenty hours a week, but they, again, because I was a student, they arranged my work schedule around my classes so I would tell them when my classes were and they would give me work around that. So it had its good points and its bad points—it was, again, an interesting experience to work for (emphasizes) "the phone company."

Q: Mm-hm, I'm sure. I'm trying to think. So, sorry I was just thinking about how much things have changed since then. That's pretty amazing, technology-wise.

Melody: Yeah, the technology that we have—well, what’s interesting is, speaking of technology-wise, in 1969. In July of 1969, first man on the moon. That summer when I was loading books back and forth was the summer when the first man stepped on the moon. Well, when you look at the technology that was used to take those first steps for mankind onto the moon, we have more technology in our cellphone.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: And more power, you know, everything in these computers than was used for that. So it’s changed remarkably in the last fifty years. It’s as different in that sense for my mother, who grew up in a house with no indoor plumbing, no electricity, you know. So, she joked—she would always say before she passed that, “I hope God will never make me live in a place that doesn’t have central heat or indoor plumbing.” Because, you know, to grow up in the woods in central Wisconsin in the middle of winter, and the house they lived in, the only place that was warm was within two or three feet of the stove and everything else that you had would be literally frozen. So we, you know, it’s quite different from what I grew up with, and hard for someone to imagine. And I remember, now my niece is now about, mm, just about forty. And when she was eleven years old, she came out to visit me in San Francisco with another eleven-year-old girlfriend of hers. And I took them to an Amish quilt exhibit. And so this would have been about 1988 or ‘89. And so they loved the quilts. I was really surprised. I didn’t know whether eleven-year-old girls would like quilts, or—but you know, they were very beautiful.

[40:00]

But outside of the quilt exhibit there was this whole exhibit about the Amish. So I was trying to explain to them about the Amish, so I said, “Well, they live without anything that’s not in the Bible, so no electricity, no televisions, no Nintendo.” And they looked at me and said, “No Nintendo!?”

Q: (laughs) Just unthinkable.

Melody: Unthinkable! So yes, life has certainly—even the Mundelein experience of technology has changed from that time. And like the language labs—I mean, that was a brand-new thing to have these laboratories where you could sit there with headphones, and talk in, and practice French or German or something. That was new, state-of-the-art. Now it’s on your cell phone, right? (laughs)

Q: Yup. Carry it around with you. I wanted to ask, ‘cause speaking of change, you talked quite a bit about all the change that was going on while you were in school. So, the British Invasion, the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, and then the assassinations.

Melody: It was, I mean—Well, we started in the fall of ‘66 and when you start looking at what had happened—I mean, the music in the country and the world but let’s say, Europe and the United States, changed so much with The Beatles and all the other kind of British groups, The Moody Blues, The Rolling Stones, I mean, and other groups maybe not as famous. So the music

scene was a big part of life. And of course my freshman year, we had—in some sense it was a person high point in my life that I got to see Simon and Garfunkel perform live at Mundelein.

Q: (laughs) At Mundelein?

Melody: At Mundelein! Yes.

Q: (laughs) Oh my goodness.

Melody: Well, this was in the fall of '66. They performed at Mundelein. I still remember my jaw dropping, the music was so beautiful. It was—they were so good. And it was one of the most fabulous concerts I ever was at in my life, in terms of how good they were.

And so, that was sort of part of—the music scene was certainly part of life. You know, who came out with— If The Beatles have a new album out or so-and-so has a new album out, and so whoever went and got that album, you went—that was part of hanging out in the dorm, was if somebody had a new album, you'd go listen to their album, they'd got so-and-so's album. And so I think the music certainly was a big thing. But the other atmosphere of school, you know, talking about activities, the Civil Rights Movement was really in full force and at full impact in 1966 and that's when, you know, people were doing things like going down to the South and register people and there were all kinds of things. And there were sit-ins and other demonstrations. And of course that was something the nuns—the BVMS—were involved with.

They certainly promoted civil rights and wanted to teach that kind of thing—that all people should be treated like God’s children, kind of thing. They were approaching it from a theological, philosophical perspective, not—and they still do today. I mean, the BVMs are still involved in this kind of issues. They haven’t stopped.

So, there were civil rights events and things on campus, presentations, talks, and marches, and things like that. And then it evolved into the Anti-War Movement, I mean, or the Peace Movement, depending on one’s perspective. (Holds up peace sign with two fingers) “Peace, man,” you know.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: And of course that was another influence going on in the country, and it certainly impacted Mundelein—not so much directly but as part of the college culture. You had LSD that was out there. Or you know there were people—you know, some people took LSD, some people smoked pot. It was certainly—they knew people who did, if they weren’t doing it themselves, and so it was—the counterculture was starting at Mundelein.

[45:00]

And so it was kind of interesting, because my freshman year, for example, you could not go into the main hallways where the stairwell is in the main lobby of the Skyscraper, if you didn’t have a skirt on. You had to have a skirt on or a dress. Now I’m not talking about torn blue jeans. You could not have—if you were wearing slacks, because jeans were not allowed in class, at least

freshman year, you had to go through the back doors, you know, and go up the back stairwells to go to class 'cause that wasn't appropriate dress. Now, that didn't last beyond freshman year. But that was the rule in freshman year. So, I mean, clearly by 1970, when we were leaving, I mean, kids were in jeans and t-shirts and stuff in class. It was, you know—so we were really in that transition period. Our class really was part of—again, being a social science, sociology person looking back at some of this, 1966 was a very pivotal year on the planet in terms of these kinds of changes. And I think that our class participated in this without consciously knowing we were doing it. We were just part of it, part of the new music, the new look, the long hair and bellbottom pants. And again, I'm not saying necessarily everyone—you had friends who were smoking pot, if you weren't doing it. It was a whole different attitude. So I associate it with the movement of youth, because at the same time that we were starting—around the same time that we were starting school was the Cultural Revolution in China. It started in the spring of '66. And when Mao Zedong mobilized the youth of China, basically, kids who would have been in college—they closed all the colleges—and the kids just roamed the hillsides and changed the cultural of China, tore down all kinds of religious and other things, all the temples and stuff were destroyed, bourgeois people were put into reeducation camps. It wasn't particularly, from our perspective, a positive movement, but it was the fact that the youth, they wanted something new. They were naturally—so Mao gave them something. He gave them a little red book, and said “here's what you do.”

But in that sense, our class—I still remark on—I had found among my belongings—I guess it's going to be backwards in the video--(reads) “An Honors Convocation Mundelein College Chicago, October 18th, 1966.” And this was an opening program where they were honoring various prior classes—the existing classes for their grades or whatever. And then for the

incoming class, which I was part of, those people came in on scholarship. So I was listed because I came in on an Illinois state scholarship. So I'm on the program. So they had—so this was the Mundelein thing. Everybody marched into the auditorium in cap and gown, and the professors and all the faculty had their cowls on, and they marched on up onto the stage. And we had this formal presentation, et cetera. And I'm pretty sure by the end—by the time I was a senior—I don't think they did that the same way anymore. But I know, for our class—so you were supposed to march in with your class in cap and gown. But if you accidentally forgot your gown, you could get a little slip and go sit up in auditorium—I mean, in the balcony of the auditorium. So you didn't—I mean obviously because you couldn't miss this. Unless you had a doctor's permission, you had to be there. So if you didn't march in with your class, you could go up to the balcony. And so I was like, I just had this reaction, like, “This is the stupidest thing that I ever—I don't wanna do this.” So I had a cap and gown in my locker, but I just went and got a slip.

[50:00]

And I went up to the balcony. And up in the balcony was half of my class—I don't know about half but a third of my class. But a whole bunch of us just felt the same way, that like, “This is the stupidest thing. Why do we want to do this?” And I didn't talk to anybody else about it. It wasn't like I fomented it or they fomented me, or anything like that. We just had a natural reaction to pomp and circumstance that we just thought it was stupid, and we just didn't want to do it. And so that was, I think—I sort of say our class came in with just a different attitude. And we've been working on our 50-year reunion program with a lovely, absolutely delightful lady who was from the class of 1968. And though she was, you know, in school when we were in school, she was still part of “You do what the nuns tell you.” And that was not my class. My class was, “Well, if the nuns tell you, I want to know why” (folds arms stubbornly). You know. “Why should I do it?

Just ‘cause you said”—you know, that’s what my mother used to say or my dad used to say. “Just ‘cause the nuns said it doesn’t mean I have to do it.” So we were just naturally different. And it had to do with the times. Again, as I said, we started school in the middle of the Civil Rights Movement, it moved into the Anti-War Movement, and of course the Women’s Movement came, in a sense, out of the—to a great extent, came out of the Peace Movement. And I don’t know if you know this piece of history or not, but part of it had to do with that so many of the people doing these marches, and these protests, and doing pamphleting, and doing all the stuff that you did to demonstrate and get your ideas out—all the workers doing the stuff were the women. But they were being treated marginal, like “Yeah, you can do all the work.” But they weren’t being treated with, you know—even in the Civil Rights Movement, you’re going, “It’s about equal rights!” But no, you’re relegated to getting the coffee and doing the typing and that sort of thing. The other book that was actually—and there were lots of books that were fomenting change in the Women’s Movement—but probably the most seminal was Betty Friedan’s *[The] Feminine Mystique*, which I—I’d have to see what year it was published, but it was—I’m thinking it was ‘64, ‘65, something like that. And of course, Gloria Steinem and all the other spokespeople who were writing—if not outright books, they were writing articles, and other books came out. So there was a whole awakening. And so, in a girls’ school, it’s a perfect place for the Women’s Movement to be discussed. Differently that I think it would have been down the street at Loyola. As I mentioned when we chatted last week, I think for myself, and one of the reasons I really liked going to Mundelein was that when I was in class or sitting in the Tea Room or in one of the lounges at Coffey Hall or someplace, and chatting with my friends, we were not encumbered by having to relate to guys. I mean, (laughs) we didn’t have to, like, be competing with each other, you know? About “What’s he going to think? I want him to like me,

not you.” None of those things were—we were just there for the ideas and the topics and the issues. And wanted to discuss with each other, you know, why is there air? Which, by the way, that’s an album, a comedy album put out by the now-discredited Bill Cosby. But it’s still a funny album, no matter what his current reputation is. He talks about dating a coed who would walk around—he was a Phys. Ed major, and she was a Philosophy major, and she would say “Why is there air?” And he would say, “Every Phys. Ed guy knows why that is—to blow up basketballs!” (both laugh) So, it’s funny.

[55:00]

But anyway, so I think Mundelein was really, during that time—obviously 1968 was a really pivotal year, again, on the planet. And in this country, we had, in April, Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated. In connection with that, Chicago had major riots, along with riots all around the country. So that was a big issue. ‘Cause if you lived in the city, you couldn’t not notice that (laughs) that there were riots going on. And then—I’m trying to remember—I think it was end of June, beginning of July, RFK was assassinated in California—Robert F. Kennedy. And then later in the summer, we had the Democratic National Convention here in Chicago, which again was televised around the world with this—all these protesters who were there against the war. And by that time, Lyndon—LBJ, Lyndon Baines Johnson—had already decided not to run for president. He gave his famous speech: “I will not run. I will not accept the nomination of my party, I’m not—I’m leaving, I’m not going to do this anymore.” Because of the war. So people were just sick and tired of the war, and sick and tired of him. And still, it didn’t end until 1972. I mean it still took that much longer to end it, even though there were not, you know, too many people who were for it. And that was another funny story that I tell about Mundelein, which was that we would have the symposium about the war. And so they would be put on by somebody—I don’t

know which department or some club, I don't remember who sponsored them—and so there would be faculty that would speak on this issue. So we would have two or three faculty members against the war, and we always had one faculty member who would be for the war. Her name was Ann Matasar. She was the political science professor—her name was Dr. Matasar, she was a PhD. She was for the war all the way until, I'm guessing, the fall of '69 or something like that. And she finally changed her position, she said, not because she thinks that the war—she was against the war, per se, but she was against the division of the country. That the country was being divided, and that we shouldn't--our country shouldn't be so divided—this shouldn't be such a divisive issue and we needed to pull our country together. And it was more important for the country not to be divided than for us to be pursuing this war. So ,she ultimately—we had no one to go on the other side of the panel. (both laugh)

It really was very, as I say, very interesting times that we had going on during our time at school. And that certainly impacted us, I mean, along with the music. And Woodstock happened, and the Summer of Love happened. Obviously they didn't happen in Chicago. Woodstock happened in Woodstock [Illinois] and the Summer of Love out in—. But again, you know, that whole feeling and the music and all that went with it was impacting even students at Mundelein. And it was part of the times that we lived in.

Q: Absolutely. I do want to check, 'cause we are at 4 o'clock--or I guess 2 o'clock your time.

Are you okay to keep going? I have a couple more questions.

Melody: Um, yeah. Okay.

Q: Alright, fabulous. So, one of the things you mentioned was the New Church Mass at the Religious Education Center. Could you tell me a bit about that?

Melody: (nodding) Well, there, again, was one of those lovely little brownstone buildings—or little Sheridan Road mansions that Mundelein owned. And they turned it into this Religious Education Center. And so one of the things that we had there—again, especially I would have been more involved in it probably, you know, my freshman–sophomore year than junior–senior year, I don’t remember exactly.

[1:00:00]

But we would have masses that were, you know, quote-unquote (holds up air quotes with fingers) “underground” masses in the sense that they were not sanctioned by the Archbishop or whatever. I mean, cause the joke was, you know, we would have a loaf of bread (holds hands up to show shape of loaf, emphasizes dramatically) and, you know, a big cup of wine (holds up hand to hold wine glass), and we would, you know, I mean the priest would—this was considered very scandalous kind of stuff to have. And then standing and singing, everyone just sort of standing around in a circle around the priest and we would hold hands—I mean, for us it was all cool and wonderful, you know. For someone like myself, who grew up originally with a Latin mass, with the priest standing up on the altar with his back to you, mumbling stuff in a language you don’t understand, and every now and then saying something loud and then going back, you know, to have a participatory religious service was wonderful and something new and so I think that was just something—part of the—and the nuns were perfectly okay—I don’t know

if they necessarily wanted us—I think they just: “Don’t tell the Archbishop you’re doing this! Go do what you want—don’t tell the Archbishop.” But it was all—I don’t know now, because I’m not Catholic anymore.

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: So I don’t exactly know what’s going on in the Catholic Church these days that much. The only time I go into a Catholic church is if a family member is getting married or buried, or something like that. But it was, at that time, I think a very—I think part of, for a lot of people, it was enhancing the experience to have a connected, religious, spiritual—to have a spiritual experience connected to a religious activity. The two didn’t necessarily go together, and this allowed you to bring the two together. So, yeah, Mundelein was a hotbed of new ideas back then.
(both laugh)

Q: I love that (laughs). Let’s see. Your graduating class is the one that ended the Skyscraper.

Melody: Yeah, you know that’s an interesting thing. I don’t know why it stopped. And I’m guessing only that—I mean, I don’t think it was stopped because of a disciplinary issue or something like that. I think it was just they couldn’t get—it obviously had been a student-run newspaper, and yeah, faculty advisors and whatever—and I think the students just thought they didn’t want to put their time and effort into it, is my guess. There weren’t--you didn’t have

enough volunteers to do it. I think they were busy doing anti-war marches and other kinds of activities that they thought were more relevant. And so, if they—I mean, I never even would have dreamt to volunteer for that. But of course, I didn't really volunteer for a lot of stuff at school, mainly because I was self-supported—I was working, as I say, I worked throughout the school year at least twenty hours a week, you know, plus transportation to and from. So I mean, between that and trying to get decent grades, I probably could have volunteered for something, but I just never did.

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: And I think that—I mean, that's my guess—lack of interest. That they couldn't get enough people who were interested, you know. They were looking at bigger issues than the local *Mundelein* newspaper. So I really can't comment on why it went away, but that did happen.

Q: Okay. I guess just a little question about the activism you talked about earlier. The marches and events that you attended—what were they like? What was the atmosphere like?

Melody: Well, in great sense, I would say, very hopeful.

[1:05:00]

I think that the whole idea was—there was a recognition, I think—as I say, we started with the issues primarily around civil rights and race relations, and, you know, we saw images on

television of, you know, policemen turning dogs and hoses on marchers and stuff like that. There was a natural thing of, “We’ve got to do something to change this.” And so, I think there was just a lot of camaraderie. “We Shall Overcome” was—you know, people would sing, sit around and hold hands and kumbaya. A lot of people joke about that, in fact. Have you ever heard of the comedian Tom Lehrer?

Q: (smiles) Yes.

Melody: Do you know his song about the folk song army?

Q: No.

Melody: He did this parody. He says, (sings) “We are the folk song army, guitars are the weapons we bring to the war against poverty, war, and injustice. Ready, aim, sing!” I mean—

Q: (laughs)

Melody: In a certain sense, we were—there was a naiveté that we had, but it was very—we wanted to change the world. And there was a feeling that, you know, being together with other people, that we all shared the same sentiment and we wanted to make our voices heard. So yeah,

I think it was, on the whole, very hopeful. And Bob Dylan's song, "The Times Are A-Changin'," that really was our anthem. When we heard Bob Dylan's song, we said, "Bobby, you've got it right!" I mean, the times, they are a-changing, and we really felt that we were part of changing the world. And maybe we didn't change it enough (laughs) but we did change it. It was definitely not the same after that.

Q: Absolutely.

Melody: Did it help? Or did it answer your question?

Q: Absolutely! I guess two more questions that I can think of at the moment. First, how have you stayed connected with Mundelein after you graduated?

Melody: Well, (laughs) I can't say I was a heavy donor, but I have made some donations. You know, that's one way they like you to stay connected.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: And it's understandable. I have stayed connected with several of my classmates. So, we actually had a group of five of us who stayed—would get together regularly. And then, first I moved out to San Francisco—to the bay area—in 1997, and I moved back to Chicago in 1998.

So during that time, whenever I got into town, then I would call my friends. So we got together at least once or twice a year when I was in town. And then after, in 2002 when I moved out here, I mean, the issue was still when Sybil's in town. I would call them and say, "I'm coming to Chicago," and we would get together. So I still would tend to see them once or twice a year, 'till our friend Gretel passed away three years ago. So that Mundelein clique kind of stayed together, but I can't say that outside of that group of Mundelein friends—but I would occasionally—I was on a mailing list so I did occasionally go to events at Mundelein. 'Cause I would see that they had a speaker or a topic. And I know one of the more momentous things for me was a musical event that actually was at the Learning Resource Center in the auditorium. William Ferris of the William Ferris Chorale came—and I believe he spoke rather than sang or performed. And anyway, I was able to go up to speak to him afterwards—he has since now passed—and say to him, "Um, you were the music director at my high school, at the cathedral," and, you know, we had a nice chat. So it was a nice thing Mundelein offered. He felt delighted that he had an impact on a high school kid, and I remembered him all these years later. But Mundelein continued, of course, until its demise.

[1:10:00]

Though I have been delighted to see what Loyola has done with the Skyscraper building. I mean, they've done a magnificent job. And the Newhart Theatre is gorgeous. And, you know, so they've done a lot of things to the building, so they've made it really beautiful. And turning the Gannon Center into a women's issues center, I think, is in keeping with a lot of what Mundelein

was about. And certainly what Ann Ida Gannon—she was a marvelous person. I got an actual personal note in her same beautiful handwriting, just a few months before she passed. And I don't know if she was a hundred and one or a hundred and two. She was--'cause I had made a donation and done it in her honor, and she was like "Oh!" But she just really was inspirational, I think, to a lot of us. I mean, that she really cared about women's education. I should say she cared about educating women. Not women's education so much. She cared about that we would get something different than we might in other settings. And I do think we did. I feel sorry, in a way, that there are very few women's colleges left anywhere. Just because it's not necessarily the experience for everyone, it shouldn't be the experience for no one! (laughs)

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: So I think there's something to be said for it. I was grateful for that experience in my life.

Q: When they announced the affiliation with Loyola, right, in '91—what was that like? For an alumna.

Melody: Well, it's kind of heartbreaking because your school is disappearing. I mean, there's no two ways about it. I mean, it just—there would be no new Mundelein classes. No more kids going through that experience. So I think you can't help but feel, you know, sorry about that. But

it's sort of like my high school closed, my college closed. My law school is still going strong. But so I think you can't help but feel a sense of loss. And though Loyola has smartly—and, I think, to a great extent to help, you know, by creating the Gannon Center and the women's center and things like that, I think they gave a focus for Mundelein alumna to say, "Okay, I can really still be connected with the ideals of Mundelein and the Mundelein experience by helping out in that. Though I did take a class at Loyola (laughs), one class that I can remember. There might have been a second class but I know I took one for sure 'cause I remember the teacher and the subject matter. I really learned a lot—it was a great class. But I think we always felt that Loyola was the other school. And we certainly hung out—I certainly had been to the Student Union and I'd go there, and the guy that I married was a Loyola student, so it wasn't like I didn't know Loyola people. But we felt that we had our own school and our own experience. And it was—even if we were the butt of jokes, you know, by some of the Loyola frat guys or whatever. That's okay, you know. If you think whatever, that's fine. But as I said, I think there couldn't help but be a sense of loss. But I do think that there is a feeling of continuity with the Gannon Center, and a feeling like, okay, I'm helping with women in education issues, women in leadership, which certainly—women in leadership is certainly something that Ann Ida Gannon wanted us to pursue and push and to be part of. And I think that was good. As I said, I think it was very smart of Loyola. And my guess is the BVMs had their input into that discussion, and you know I wasn't there, they didn't invite me to that discussion, so.

[1:15:00]

But I wouldn't be surprised if they said, you know, "We need to do something for who we are, for it not to just completely disappear into the ethers." So I think there was a feeling—the school

closed, but the spirit of Mundelein lives on in certain activities that are being held, connected to the Gannon Center primarily.

Q: Speaking of Ann Ida Gannon, what was it—what was your interaction with her when you were a student? What was that like?

Melody: Well, I can't say I had tons of personal interactions with her. Enough that she knew who I was and, you know. She would talk, of course, to the whole school at a school presentation, but there were other things she was present at and where she would talk about her concerns. And you got her explanations—even, I think, to our freshman class, 'cause that was one whole thing too: welcoming us in, telling us what her views—. You got a sense she was sharing from her heart. And it wasn't rote. She wasn't that kind—. She had a lovely presence, a charisma in a very genteel way. You know, not the way someone would say, "Oh, they're charismatic, they're intense." She was a genteel charisma. But she was also very strong—you didn't feel like she was a pushover. Just 'cause she was genteel, you weren't going to get anything past her. She was smart. And so I think that it was more in settings where there were faculty discussions or presentations or things that I got to hear most of what she said. I think there were two or three times where I ended up having to talk to her about something, or there were small groups or something. She—as I said, it was kind of nice, you know—she remembered me personally. But I didn't have many, many intense personal interactions with her. But as president of the school, I really was impressed with her. And the whole thinking of the school and the whole reorganization that they came up with, a whole new way of structuring classes and a whole new

way of doing things, I mean, they were willing to experiment and try something that wasn't being done on any other campus that I know of at the time. And so they were trying to say, "We're going to think outside the box." And that was, I think, fit in with my generation. We just thought that that's what education was about—learning to think out of the box. And I'm not so sure that that's—I don't know whether other kids going to school get that same kind of orientation. Yeah. Anything else?

Q: One more question!

Melody: Okay.

Q: Besides the commuter lounge, did you have any other favorite places on campus?

Melody: Ah, well, that's interesting. Well, obviously lunch in the tearoom. I would hang out in the tearoom from certain days depending on class scheduling issues. So certain days, I'd have lunch, and then some other people would—you'd get a group of people sitting around the table and you'd have eaten lunch an hour ago, and you're all just still sitting and talking about whatever the topic of the day was. Until they closed—they kicked us out. I think that they'd close around 2:30, 3 o'clock, or something like that, and so we'd have to go either—

And of course for studying, I'd have to say—in terms of hanging out, I loved studying in the Learning Resource Center. That wasn't hanging out. That was going and finding a carrel, and it

was a great place to block everything else away and actually focus on studying. I mean the other place that we kind of hung out too was the lounge at Coffey Hall. It was an alternate place—that or they would also have music sometimes, from time to time.

[1:20:00]

And I'm trying to think. And then, of course, I can't say I never hung out at Loyola's student union, but it wasn't a place I went a lot. 'Cause I did make friends with some Loyola students, obviously, as I said I married one (laughs) so I did sometimes hang out with some of these Loyola people that I got to know at the Student Union at Loyola. And actually, this Jesuit over there—his last name was, I want to say it was—I think it was Robert Fox, but I can't remember. I know his last name was Fox. And he would have sort of a group of kids hanging out with him. And he talked conspiratorially—you know, he would tell us about what was really going on, and things like that. And so we were like, "Oh wow, here's someone who's telling us about dirt on the Jesuits," and stuff like that. And things in the church that were—you know. He was someone who also would do these underground masses with loaves of bread and things like that, so. But I have to say that I did not have as many hangouts—I mean, people who lived there, the dorm resident students, would certainly have had more time to hang out in different places. And I was then busy, and I'm still busy. You know. And I haven't, in a sense, slowed down since school.

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: But it was—I still feel very grateful that I had the Mundelein experience, and I think—I think it was foundational in ways that I certainly couldn't have known at the time. But I think

being introduced to literature, and certain classic works. And I may not always have read them, but I had heard of that author or had heard of that, and I knew about this thing, and so when someone makes—I mean, the idea of making literary references. I remember going to see a play called “Picasso at the Lapin Agile.” Have you ever heard of that?

Q: My high school put it on, but I didn’t get to see it.

Melody: Yeah, it started—it was first put on at Steppenwolf. But it was written by Steve Martin, the comedian Steven Martin—he’s the writer of it. And it’s a fun play—I’ve seen it a couple of times. But what’s funny about it is he makes all kinds of literary references that that play is not gonna be funny if you have no idea what all these literary references and all the puns that he’s making. I mean obviously, I won’t tell you the end. There’s a thing at the end that’s more pop culture, that anyone would get. But the rest of it that he did is—and I feel sorry for people who are not getting that kind of foundational stuff—if you don’t—.

I was going to say, one of the classes that just came to mind—and I can’t remember the professor who taught it, and I don’t even remember exactly whether it was under—I think it was. I’m sure it was a philosophy class. It was an Albert Camus class. And we basically read, at that time, all the books of Camus that were published in English. Which, now I think there are more of them that have been published in English. But at that time, I think we read all of the Camus books at that time. And of course, having—to me—Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, and all this stuff, I mean that was—as I say, I don’t know whether people today, kids today, are getting the same kind of background in what’s going on.

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: So I am grateful And it is starting to get to the point where we need to think about ending. (laughs)

Q: I was gonna say, unless there's anything you have, that's all of my questions for now.

Melody: Well, no, I think—I suppose since this is going into the archives, as I understand, I do think it's worth letting the listener—whoever may be listening to this hour-and-a-half thing—is that I did end up going to law school.

[1:25:00]

I went to Chicago Kent IIT. I graduated the first in my division, which was my night division—I went to school nights for three years. I was a lawyer for 38 years, primarily in the financial services industry, and had Mundelein as a background to all I did in my career. So that was, I think it was very useful and helpful in going through law school. I did well in law school and then I did well, I think reasonably well, as an attorney. And so if people want to know what she did after all that, that's what I did. And now I've been retired, and now I'm involved in nonprofits in my little town in—well, I live in the Sedona area. Clarkdale is close to Sedona, Arizona. So, I thought that would be nice to have on the record.

Q: Yes. You also mentioned that you're no longer Catholic. Would you just say a little bit about that?

Melody: Well, I had—it's interesting. The joke that was in a Playboy magazine years and years and years ago about if you want your kid to be President, for example, what school should you send him to? So it was like Harvard, Princeton, Yale. If you want them to be this, that, or the other, send them to this school or that school. So they said, if you want your kid to lose their religion, what school to send them to? And they said University of Chicago, UCLA—or UC Berkeley, the University of Chicago, or any religious institution.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: And I think it was interesting—I sort of joked about how I kind of got disaffected from the Catholic Church. It was sort of a trite thing. But I did. I just got disconnected from the Catholic Church. And I never got disconnected from a sense of connecting to the divine, but I didn't know what to do with it and how to package it. And after about twenty years of that, I ended up kind of going back to the Catholic Church, mostly because it was all that I knew. And, of course, it made my mother happy. But I still didn't really feel comfortable there. And I sort of started searching. And I got into mystical—studying Eastern Buddhism, Daoism, and things of that sort. And Buddhism makes a lot of sense to me. Daoism makes a lot of sense to me. I've traveled in Asia. I've been to India a couple times, Nepal, which is a Hindu country, primarily, though the Buddhists—the Sherpas are all Buddhist, and those people. So anyway, I had a friend

who is Jewish, and he said to me, you know, “You don’t have to go all the way to the East to find mysticism. There is mysticism in the West.” And he gave me a book on kabbalah. And so I approached—I ended up reading some kabbalistic books. And I came across a book called “The Jew and the Lotus.” Have you heard of that one?

Q: Mm-hm.

Melody: And so, when I read Kamenetz’s explanation of Judaism to the Buddhists, and he’s trying to explain it, I went, “Oh! I get that.” I, as sort of a Buddhists student—I mean I was never Buddhist, but a student of Buddhism—I got it. So I then started pursuing studying Judaism and ended up going to some services, and then eventually I just basically—I thought it was bizarre but I really felt that I was called. There was an inner voice that said, “This is what you’re supposed to do.” And I was like, “Well, are you sure? This doesn’t seem right. I mean, me, going from one religion to another religion like that?” But I ended up converting to Judaism with a Reform congregation.

[1:30:00]

Here in the Sedona area, we have a non-affiliated congregation, so we’re not any—we’re open to any Jews of any flavor.

Q: (laughs)

Melody: Mainly 'cause there aren't that many. And I've been very involved in it since we moved here in 2002, so I've been very involved with the—we don't even have a Jewish name, so our synagogue. It's just called the Jewish Community of Sedona and the Verde Valley. It just shows we can't even agree on a Jewish name, so. I've learned that two Jews, at least three opinions, so it's just sort of the way things are. But that's been another part of my life. And an important part, I think, that—ultimately, you know, joking about “Why is there air?” or “Why are we here?” I think the ultimate questions are more important than “Did I make a lot of money?” or anything like that. Or did I get great As or Bs or any of those kind of things. We're here to really love each other, and that's something that you don't necessarily know when you're young. You think, “I'm here to do something.” And we did, we thought we were here to change the world. And I think we wanted to change the world because we cared. I don't think we wanted to change the world just because we didn't care. But ultimately, the only thing that you take with you when you leave this mortal coil is the love that you gave and the love that you got. And that's a great Beatles song, but it's (laughs) really true!

Q: (laughs)

Melody: So. Now we're definitely running overtime!

Q: (laughs) Yes, thank you so much! I can definitely stop recording now. Alright.

Melody: Alright.

[1:32:12]

[END OF INTERVIEW]