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Interview of Margaret Mary Markmann, Ph.D.

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Field Notes

Interviewee: Dr. Margeret Markmann

Interviewer: Alexander Rowan

Interview Date: 4/8/2015 (afternoon)

Interview Location: Dean of Arts and Sciences office at La Salle University

The Interviewee:

Dr. Markmann was born on April 26th 1948 at the Anderson Hospital in Center City Philadelphia. She was the fourth of eleven children born into a household of her mother, her father and her grandparents. She grew up in Philadelphia and has lived in the area for her entire life only leaving once after she completed nursing school. During her childhood her extended family lived nearby, her grandmother lived down the street and her Aunt and Uncle lived in the opposite direction. Her father was the direct descendent of Irish immigrants who settled in South West Philadelphia and lived in Southwest Philadelphia for the entirety of their lives. The family also had a summer home in Avalon, New Jersey. Dr. Markmann attended school in one of the largest Catholic Parishes in the United States. There were normally ninety students in the classroom. The school was very large and had 3,300 students attending when she was going to the school. Education was very important for Dr. Markmann and her siblings growing up. Both her father and mother made a point to try and send all eleven of them to college or some form of higher education. After she finished high school she took what she believed was the more practical option as compared to her original desire to become a doctor. Dr. Markmann went to nursing school at St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Philadelphia Pennsylvania. She graduated in August 1969 and became a registered nurse. Dr. Markmann worked in the field nursing for a large portion of her professional life. Her first experience was as an emergency room nurse, a position that she held for one year before becoming a Clinical instructor at St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing. She went back to school to get her Bachelor of Arts degree which she received in 1998 from La Salle University with a major in History and a minor in English. She received her Master of Arts from Temple University in 2001. Her original intention was to use that degree to teach high school students. However after she had contacted the Arch Diocese she did not hear back from them for four years. During that time she was contacted to teach a few history courses at La Salle University. That was the start of her professional life at La Salle University. She has been teaching at La Salle University as an adjunct professor since 2002. The majority of the courses that Dr. Markmann teaches at La Salle are Global history courses, most notably HIS 151 and HIS 251. She has also worked in the Dean of Arts and Sciences office as a student advisor for five years, non-consecutively. Many of her

children have attended La Salle University and her husband is currently on the board of trustees at La Salle. She has been a member of the Parent's association at La Salle and both she and her husband have set up the Markmann scholarship for students who attended Catholic School.

The Interviewer

I, Alexander Rowan (b. 1993 in Oakland, CA); grew up in Concord California. I attended High school at Benicia High School and at the time of this interview currently attending La Salle University with a major in History. I plan in getting my B.A. in 2015. All of my immediate family lives in California, particularly in what is known as the Bay Area. I have extended family spread out over much of the United States. My father has worked in aviation all of his life and my mother has been an educator in the public school system for the entirety of my life. My parents divorced when I was very young but they currently both live in Benicia California.

Background

I was originally placed on the track to interview Dr. Markmann by Dr. Allen who noted a lack in the representation of Adjunct professors within the oral history collection at La Salle University. During the course of preparing for the interview my one major flaw I found was relying on electronic communication to try and get in touch with Dr. Markmann. I underestimated the effectiveness of simply meeting in person, or perhaps overestimated the effectiveness of trying to set up certain logistical issues such as the date of the interview over email. The one major thing I would have changed was getting off of using e-mail much earlier as it would have made the whole preparation process much easier. However one thing that I did notice during my research in preparation for the interview was that the Adjunct teaching staff goes almost entirely unnoticed at the university level. Dr. Allen was able to provide me with a number of articles about the situation of Adjunct teachers. In the end however my best source for coming up with questions was Dr. Markmann herself who provided me with a full CV which gave me a very good starting point for information that could lead to further avenues of research.

My first preliminary meeting with Dr. Markmann occurred two weeks before the interview on the 25th of March. During the preliminary meeting I discussed with Dr. Markmann in further detail about what the interview would consist of. We had dealt with time to a minor extent before the first meeting, and by that I mean we had decided on a single session interview and I had told Dr. Markmann that I was looking for two hours of interview time total. During the Meeting on the 25th of March we established that the interview date would be the 8th of April 2015. I also inquired if any topics were off limits so to speak. Dr. Markmann originally seemed confused by the question until I explained that the recording would be a life interview with a focus on her time at La Salle. Dr. Markmann did not restrict any topic at the time of the meeting

on March 25th. The location for the interview would be in the Dean of Arts and Sciences office at 2pm.

Description of the Interview

I arrived at the Dean of Arts and Sciences office at roughly 1:45 pm on the day of the interview. Dr. Markmann was advising a student when I arrived. I went over my notes and questionnaire that I had prepared before Dr. Markmann invited me in to start the interview. We spoke very briefly before starting the recording. I went over the Legal releases and the questionnaire with Dr. Markmann as well as double checking the CV she had sent me to make sure everything was in order. When we had determined that everything was acceptable and we were ready to begin we began the interview, the time was roughly 2:15pm. For much of the interview I was nervous for time as I did not want to keep Dr. Markmann much longer than the two hours that she had allotted in her schedule for the interview if I could avoid it. I had originally planned to conduct the oral history interview as chronologically as possible. This proved to only hold partially as Dr. Markmann would frequently talk primarily in themes and during many points in the interview the topic would in certain cases jump to a related topic to the original question. At first I found it difficult to adjust to this course of the interview that I had not prepared for but it provided for what seemed to be a much more comfortable form of question and answer for Dr. Markmann. We did not take any breaks during the course of the interview and it lasted for just over two hours.

During the course of the interview I was surprised and relieved with the very genuine and honest questions that Dr. Markmann gave throughout the course of the interview. After receiving the articles from Dr. Allen involving Adjunct teaching I was very worried that the topic would be one that could cause trouble as I really wanted to get the perspective of an adjunct teacher on the conditions of adjunct teaching at a university level. Dr. Markmann seemed very comfortable talking about her teaching experience as an adjunct professor at La Salle. She did not avoid any of the questions I asked her about her education or work experience. I only had to stop the interview recording very briefly about halfway through the interview at Dr. Markmann's request as she wanted to share something with me but did not want the information recorded. Other than that one instance every question that I asked of Dr. Markmann was answered.

I noticed two major flaws on my part during the course of the interview. The first flaw was that I would sometimes relate my parents' experiences with either teaching or growing up in an Irish Catholic family in Philadelphia to many of the answers that Dr. Markmann gave. Another major worry for me was the use of filler type language mostly things such as "ummm", I tried to avoid using such filler language during the interview and I was only partially successful during different sections of the interview.

Notes on Recording

For the interview I used my phone a Nokia Lumia 635 with an audio recorder application that I purchased. I ran it on battery power. I had tested the battery strength while the application was in use once before and I had found that the application was able to run for much longer than I needed it to on battery power. The one major issue I found with the recording was that it could only save the recording in an mp3 or mp4 format. After the interview was complete I saved the recording onto my laptop and onto a flash drive as a backup in case one source of the interview or another ran into a serious problem. To create the Log for the recording I used windows media player and modified the playback speed of the recording.

Editing the Log

- 1) Removed the last names of family members
- 2) Added time stamps above each log entry relating to the time on the recording
- 3) Placed questions in parentheses in the event that I felt the theme of the log entry was finished after another question
- 4) Changed references to faculty from first name to title and last name
- 5) Added themes in bold text when I believed that the topic of the interview had changed in some way