

**Interview of Barbara Millard, Ph.D.**  
**By Aviad Adlersberg**  
**La Salle University**  
**March 15, 2007**  
*Transcribed by Alexandria Moraschi, Fall 2020*

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Aviad: Okay, uh I'm here. It's March 15<sup>th</sup> at Dr. Millard's office. Um, and I just want to know that you agree to be uh, tape recorded?

Millard: That's right.

Aviad: Okay, and we can get started. We're just gonna start with some background information first. Um, you can feel free, you can answer questions as long or short as you want. If you don't want to answer, that's fine too.

Millard: Okay.

Aviad: Okay, um so the first question is what is your current position at La Salle University?

Millard: I'm a professor of English.

Aviad: Okay, and uh when and where were you born?

Millard: I was born in Philadelphia, 1943.

Aviad: Okay, um what are your parents' names?

Millard: (laughs) This is going to be funny because they're odd names. Thelma, T-H-E-L-M-A and Embro, E-M-B-R-O.

Aviad: Okay, um where did they come from?

Millard: My father was born in Reardon<sup>1</sup>, Italy and emigrated to this country as an adult. My mother, eh was first generation American. Her parents had immigrated from Italy. She was born here.

Aviad: Um, and what did you parents do for a living?

Millard: My mother was a homemaker. My father, uh because he was Italian trained, he was a cabinetmaker. Uh, and as a cabinetmaker, he worked for Lester Piano<sup>2</sup> making pianos and then for most of his life, he worked for what is now Boeing. It was Piosaki Helicopters and

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<sup>1</sup> it is unclear which city she is referring to, possibly Riardo, Italy in the Italian region of Campania, fifty kilometers north of Naples.

<sup>2</sup> Lester Piano Company was established in 1888 in Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

now, then it was Boeing Aircraft and then, uh Vertol I believe and then it was Boeing Aircraft<sup>3</sup>. And he made wooden models of, um aircraft that they were designing so he was in research and development.

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Aviad: Um, where did you live while you were growing up?

Millard: West Philadelphia until I was about 16, 15 and then Drexel Hill<sup>4</sup>.

Aviad: Okay, so okay so you didn't grow up in the same place you were born.

Millard: Well, I... (laughs)

Aviad: Or would you consider that...

Millard: I, I think I grew up to 15 in West Philadelphia, uh, even though I moved to the suburbs, I continued at my high school which is West Philadelphia Catholic<sup>5</sup> so I traveled into the city for high school. I didn't want to change schools.

Aviad: Um, did you always know you were going to go to English teaching research??

Millard: No, I think I always thought I would be a teacher, but I wasn't really sure. I thought about mathematics at first and uh when I was in college, I had declared a French major and I really had a double major in French and English and did some post-baccalaureate work in French and my first teaching position, actually my second teaching position was in secondary schools and I taught French and English. But when I decided to pursue the doctorate it was in English.

Aviad: Wow, what made you choose English?

Millard: I felt that I had stronger education in that discipline. I thought there were more job opportunities in that discipline, um even as early as the late 60s, uh language departments and language programs are becoming more constricted, um and I guess when push came to shove, I just loved English literature more.

Aviad: Did you ever consider any other profession other than teaching?

Millard: Um, not really seriously, no. I mean you know, as a child I had fantasies about being a fashion designer or you know whatever, but I think from when I went to school, I knew I wanted to teach.

Aviad: Uh, where did you get your degree?

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<sup>3</sup> Boeing Rotorcraft Systems (formerly Boeing Helicopters): until 2008, an American aircraft manufacturer based in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania.

<sup>4</sup> Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania

<sup>5</sup> Girls' High School was founded in 1927 and was a Lasallian school; merged in 1989 with West Philadelphia Catholic Boys' High School to make West Catholic High School.

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Millard: My baccalaureate, my uh Bachelor of Arts degree is from Mary Wood College<sup>6</sup>, Mary Wood is in Scranton, Pennsylvania. My Master's degree is from the University of Pennsylvania<sup>7</sup> and my Doctorate is from the University of Delaware<sup>8</sup>. I also have a Post-Graduate Certificate which isn't a master's degree, it's just a certificate for a program of studies at the Sorbonne University of Paris<sup>9</sup>.

Aviad: Um, I read that you specialized in Shakespearean Studies. Uh, I'm wondering if you can elaborate on exactly what that is and what drew you to that.

Millard: Actually, I did both. I did most of my coursework in American literature and I elected to do my dissertation in the field of Renaissance specifically Shakespeare, well Renaissance drama because I did my dissertation on Ben Jonson who was a colleague and contemporary of Shakespeare's. Uh, I've done most of my, not all, but a good deal of my publication has been in the field of Shakespeare Studies, uh, just because I love it literally just think that Shakespeare's the greatest writer in the history of the world as far as I know it. Now, I'm not totally conversant with some other cultures especially Eastern cultures but in terms of European cultures, while I respect Dante and Goethe and others, uh I just don't think there's anybody who has encompassed what it is to be human the way that Shakespeare has. It's just a love of my life.

Aviad: So, what exactly was your dissertation about, I mean, it was about Shakespeare?

Millard: Oh no, it was about Ben Jonson<sup>10</sup> who was a dramatist and poet and, uh writer of masques. Um, and I picked Ben Jonson because I thought that there was other opportunity uh, where there was an anniversary coming up around Jonson and I knew there'd be a rash of publication and with, with dissertations you really need to find a subject that you think you, that hasn't been done and it's very hard with Shakespeare and I didn't just want to edit a text which a lot of my friends in graduate school were doing. So, I decided as much as I loved Shakespeare, I would look at his, one of his main, uh rivals in the field of English drama, Ben Jonson and I did a dissertation on his, on all of his work which is crazy because it was an enormous dissertation. All of his work and the pastoral tradition, so I had to do a lot of research into what pastoral was, Eastern and Western pastoral literature as a whole, continental pastoral literature to understand better its context what it was that, um that Jonson does. And in a nutshell, writers in the West tend to, uh write pastoral literature, uh

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<sup>6</sup> Mary Wood College: Catholic liberal art university in Scranton, Pennsylvania; established in 1915

<sup>7</sup> University of Pennsylvania: private Ivy League research university in Philadelphia; founded in 1740 by Benjamin Franklin

<sup>8</sup> University of Delaware: research university located in Newark, Delaware; established in 1833

<sup>9</sup> Sorbonne University of Paris: founded in 1253 by Robert de Sorbon in Paris, France

<sup>10</sup> Ben Jonson (June 11, 1572-August 16, 1637) was an English playwright and poet who popularized the comedy of humors; regarded as the second most important English dramatist after William Shakespeare

which is also called Golden Age Literature<sup>11</sup>; it's literature of nostalgia, longing for a simpler time in the past. Uh, they tend to write that, with that focus when they get older and it seems to be related to age. That need to find something more simple and, um something that's irretrievably gone, try to reclaim it again. So, I was interested in that, I was interested in the way he played off city and country themes, uh as England was becoming urbanized. I've always been interested in literature within its context of the civilization.

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Aviad: Um, what did you know, what did you enjoy most about graduate school?

Millard: What did I enjoy most? Well, again, the literature. I just loved the reading of the literature and it's one of the reasons that I, as much as I enjoyed high school teaching because I enjoyed the students, um because you have more of an impact. You're with them for a longer period of time and they have more formative years of their lives so, that I think is part of the draw of teaching secondary education. But, if you love the subject matter, as well, then you have more of an opportunity in university teaching to really deal with the subject matter that you love very well. So, um obviously it was reading the literature, it was also the opportunity, um to have a community of scholars that you work closely with and we did that. I didn't do that at Penn, there's virtually no community at Penn when I was there for a part-time woman student. So, we're gonna get into sexism now because I left Penn because I found it so inhospitable. Uh, at that time uh there were many male students who were part of the community of professors but I was literally told by the professor, who was the graduate group chairman that I would never have a community at Penn and I should think about going because um, I wouldn't be welcomed and that turned out to be true. I mean I had the experience of male professors who at the end of a semester would invite the men in the class to his home to have sherry, but not the women. So, it was that kind of cold and distant and alienating and hostile environment. Whereas at the University of Delaware, which was a younger program, um I found a very vibrant and welcoming community of young professors and um mentors, and fellow students. So, we very often worked cooperatively in study groups and things like that and uh, we sustained one another through some of the lonely work that scholarship could be. And it was very, um very nurturing.

Aviad: Um, I'd just like to follow that then that um, you said that about the community in Delaware then was this also with male professors then?

Millard: Oh yeah.

Aviad: Okay, so it wasn't just that there were female professors at Delaware that they were good at communities?

Millard: No, actually there were very few female professors, there were some. Whereas at the English Department at the University of Pennsylvania when I was there, had one woman's name on the door, but I think she, I don't think she was active any longer. I mean her name was just on the door, the door was never - there were practically cobwebs on it. Right after this, this is

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<sup>11</sup> Golden Age literature is the age in which romantic dramas were popular in England; also known as the Age of Shakespeare or The Elizabethan Age

beside the fact but right after this Penn did have a series of lawsuits brought against, specifically their English Department. One of and we benefited actually from the loss of some of their junior faculty because women felt so discriminated against. They brought discrimination suits and we're not talking about students; we're talking about faculty who found that they were being denied tenure, they were being held to different standards than their, their male peers and they won those. They won the lawsuits so I would hope that Penn has changed in since the time when I was there but there really was, um an atmosphere and a tone to that department that was not at all good and I hope it has changed. I think it has since the 60s. A lot of the professors were Penn graduates, I will mention that which made it very clubby, yeah and inbred.

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Aviad: Well, my next question is what, what was your, what you liked the least about graduate school?

Millard: The clubby inbred stuff, right?

Aviad: Um, okay, uh where did you work before you came to La Salle?

Millard: Well, as I said, I started teaching in Philadelphia. I taught in Philadelphia schools for one-year. I taught in Darby-Colwyn which I think is now called, uh what is it called. South something Delco, I think it's south, south Southeastern Delco or something like that. I think they put districts together, but at the time was called Darby-Colwyn<sup>12</sup>. Um, they were the bad old days so I was married and as soon as I became pregnant, I had to resign. I was not permitted to take a leave of absence. My principal and superintendent wanted me to, to stay but the school board thought that it was indecent having women who were obviously pregnant in the classroom no matter how healthy they were. So, I literally had to leave my job which became a turning point for me. I mean it was crushing at the time but it refocused me so that I went back for the doctorate. I taught part-time at what is now Widener College<sup>13</sup>, at the time it was called Penn Military and Penn Morton. They had twin colleges. One was civilian, one was army and that was fun. Um, I taught part-time for them and uh, that's when I decided to go back and pursue the doctorate and then I was teaching at the University of Delaware as a teaching assistant and then later as a lecturer while I was on fellowship. So, I taught courses there as a part-time person and then I came to La Salle.

Aviad: Um, what brought you to La Salle?

Millard: I got a job here. I applied and I got the job.

Aviad: There's nothing special that your unit said?

Millard: Well, I'm obviously tied to this area. My family is here so I, I really couldn't go outside Philadelphia area. Fortunate for me, Philadelphia is second only to Boston in the number of institutions of higher education that are available, but it was a difficult time. The job market in

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<sup>12</sup> Darby-Colwyn High School: now called Penn Wood High School in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania

<sup>13</sup> Widener University: private university in Chester, Pennsylvania; established in 1821

college teaching was just closing up and I mean closing up. In the end when I went back to graduate school, I'm going to say '69, '70, people graduate students I knew were being flown out for interviews you know all expenses paid. Five, six interviews different colleges that literally stopped dead absolutely stopped dead. I'm part of a generation of Ph.D.'s a large percentage of whom never got full-time tenure-track positions in college teaching some of them struggled along with part-time work for many years and you know finally left the

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profession. They had to leave their profession because there was a demographic slump. The baby boom was over, a lot of colleges had been built in the 60s to handle the baby boom, boom and then suddenly there was a demographic slump in the 70s and colleges were contracting and so many were predicted to be out of business by you know the year 1980 and whatever. So, um I literally just made it in the door I think in terms of hiring opportunities and even then I was A.B.D. which means all but dissertation. I hadn't finished my dissertation and my advisor didn't want me to go on the job market. He was very angry. He said, first you finish the dissertation and then we launch you properly. That was in 1972. I finished my dissertation teaching full-time in 1974 and when I did, I said to him now where would you launch me? He said, I couldn't do a thing for you, there are no jobs so I was very glad that I, that I read the writing on the wall and that there was an opening for me at La Salle. I was not hired on a tenure track position. I was hired on a one-year replacement position but then the university decided to, to make me tenure track after that year.

Aviad: What do you think's one of the, what do you think some of the qualities were that make them, you know, take you on at a time when the market was shrinking like that and like you said you hadn't had your dissertation yet and then switch you from a non-tenure track to tenure track?

Millard: I'm not really sure why they were hiring one-year contracts at that time. They also hired two others, they hired four people in this department alone, in the English department alone the year I was hired. One of them was Brother Gerry Molyneaux and they were hired tenure track and then there were two of us women who were hired with one-year contracts and I'm not sure I, I know that there was one professor who was ill and had taken a leave of absence so I might have been to replace because I did pick up one of his classes that I know of so it might have been that, why they hired me in particular. Um, that's part of the history of La Salle I think and I'm relying on an anecdote by one of the people on my selection committee that the chairman who was Charles Kelly of the Philadelphia Kellys said we are now admitting women, we should have women in our department. We are going to hire women and she said that even, even with that advice, the men on the committee picked all male candidates and she said you know what let's look again and see if we don't have comparable female candidates and so they, they picked my application and this other woman's application which is sterling. She had better credentials than me and they hired us so I would hope that um what happened after that year was that I earned my place, that they thought I was good enough to offer a tenure track contract to.

Aviad: Um, can you describe the interview process at that time?

Millard: There were three people, two men and a woman. They asked me questions you know, they reviewed the details on my CV<sup>14</sup> um, asked me about my dissertation and when I was going to, to finish it. I met with the chair and he asked me questions that are now illegal like how many children I intended to have. Yes, these are now illegal questions but at the time he asked me and you know when you're in a Catholic college you're not sure what the right answer to that question is. You know it's like a trick question. I already had two at that time so I sort of danced around the question. But I felt comfortable immediately I felt comfortable in the interview with the chair even though he asked me that question. I felt comfortable with the committee and I don't remember being interviewed by the dean or anybody higher than the chair and I think for a one-year position, I was not essentially interviewed. I think for a tenure track position I would have been but not for a one-year contract.

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Aviad: Well, I guess my next question is really open-ended here. It's, it's uh what kind of challenges did you face coming in as a woman? So, once you are hired...

Millard: Lots and lots and lots. It's always difficult with transition. La Salle had just been through a process of making a decision to become co-ed and it was not a universal decision. There were people who were opposed to it. There were faculty and students who opposed it and of course most of the resistance came from the faculty, um and some of them were in my own department so when I came into the department it was, it was very noticeable that some people greeted me and were collegial and others acted as though I was invisible you know wouldn't even say hello. Uh, so I made it my business to go around to them and introduce myself and you know and, and that mostly worked. I, I still think there were some there were a couple of men who resented that thought I was pushy because I, I did take the initiative to get to know who they were. Um, I think in the classroom I, it was, it was touch and go. A lot of our students came from the same feeder schools. Many of them were diocesan high schools in the area where they'd had no female teachers in high school and so they associated women with grammar school nuns or something you know grammar school educators and I think for us as women because we would talk about this. Um, we had to prove our authority you know we were not granted as a man would automatically be granted his title and his authority and one indicator of that was even, even lately is that we were all Mrs. you know. Whether we had doctorates or not we were all Mrs. and all the men some of whom didn't have doctorates were all Doctor. That's just an assumption on the part of students about uh, authority and where it resides. So, it was difficult I think, I think the classes at that time were ninety percent male. We maybe have two or three girls in a class, they'd sort of sit in the back and hide you know and literally duck if you called on them. They were such a visible minority and some of the male students they would they had a hard time accepting even the most constructive criticism from women they were very taken with our physical appearance. One of my, the other woman who was hired with me was a very attractive. A woman with a Ph.D. from Berkeley<sup>15</sup> she's now back at the University of California system and she would get lots of personal comments on her evaluations about her dress about her legs about you know her figure things like that. Um, but you know you put up with it the other part of this was that there were so few of us women on campus that we formed a community and a community of

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<sup>14</sup> curriculum vitae, Latin for "course of life"; a written overview of someone's life work

<sup>15</sup> The University of California, Berkeley: public research university in Berkeley, California; established in 1868

interest which was very '70s. You know it was a kind of consciousness-raising group and we would meet for potluck suppers and it was a good way to vent and, and to compare because you need those touchstones, you can get paranoid very easily in a situation like that and start imagining things. "Everybody's against me" you know and "I'm being oppressed" and so it was good to kind of touch base with other people and find out what was a real issue to be concerned about and what was not and keep each other sane and of course certainly to support each other in that circumstances but change came hard. Change came hard at La Salle and during the '70s there were some, some rough patches

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I think for women to be accepted uh, as, as equal to their colleagues. I think there were rough patches with women students. Um, there was an incident. It's now you know to go down speaking of history where um, guys in the Student Union uh, kind of roped off the path and as the girls would walk down the path they'd hold up numbers, they'd rate them one to ten and there were so few female students that they were just totally intimidated by this they wouldn't eat lunch they wouldn't go anywhere near. They'd eat lunch in the bathroom because they wouldn't go to the Student Union because they, they felt they were being bullied and harassed like that and it was a big to do because when they brought it outside and literally blocked the pathway to do this and the Dean of Students got involved and it was a bit of a hassle about that but it went on for a couple of days. Yeah, it was uh, so there were those incidents and that all had to be worked out.

Aviad: Um, you mentioned that uh you guys kind of and the other faculty members formed this community.

Millard: Yeah.

Aviad: I mean if you can tell me um...

Millard: Women on campus.

Aviad: Yeah, you remember who were the other members of the faculty and uh...

Millard: Oh sure, well they were the women who were here and, and uh very few of them are still here just either because they retired or went other places hired in other opportunities. One of the women who was here when I came here who was a mentor to me was named Mickey Weinstein, Minna Weinstein. She was in the History Department. She was the first woman full professor. I was the second to be named full professor. She was the first and she was on you know all kinds of committees but it was very clear that she couldn't chair her own department, that wouldn't even though she headed all kinds of committees and everybody recognized her tremendous administrative skill that just wasn't going to happen she uh, was a Lindback<sup>16</sup> winning professor. You know she was a dynamo on campus and it turned out that she was offered a position with Middle States Accrediting Agency<sup>17</sup> and she was a friend she's just retired from that job she was a friend of La Salle all the years she was in Middle States.

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<sup>16</sup> Lindback Award: recognizes outstanding teaching by members of Drexel University faculty

<sup>17</sup> Middle States Accrediting Agency: the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools performs peer evaluation and regional accreditation of public and private schools in the Mid-Atlantic region of America

She tapped a lot of us to be on teams to evaluate other colleges which is always good experience and good for La Salle. So, she did that and she was, she was kind of uh, I'd say the leader of the group in lots of ways. Um, Caryn Musil, Caryn Musil at the time was the woman on my hiring committee she'd only been here a year when she was gutsy enough to say let's look at some of the women's applications and she is now Vice President of the American Association of Colleges and Universities which is a big deal you know she travels the world as a consultant in education and is responsible for administering huge grants from the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation and Pew Foundation and things like this and travels as a

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consultant widely in the United States as well, she's been here as a consultant. We've, we've also brought her in but she was in the English Department for many years and a good colleague. She and Mickey were instrumental along with the other woman in the department who is Judith Newton. She's the one in California and myself and some other women who are no longer here and I have to struggle to remember some of their names uh, to start the women's studies program and to set up a women's center now. There's no longer a women's center because there's no longer a need for one and that was part of the issue about feminism on campus. I mean the goal was always to mainstream you know and yeah, the need for women's center was at a time when women weren't comfortable in the normal student centers. You know they weren't integrated into the student body community so it was a place to hang out, be yourself, and you know come together and the university did give us, the college at the time gave us a little house one they've since torn down over near where the townhouses are where women could gather and have speakers and do things like that. These were women students and women faculty. Um, but you know pulling at my memory is awful trying to remember names. There were women in sociology and women in languages and I'm trying to remember who they were. Um, in Sociology especially, there's one woman who's still here, Laura Otten who directs a small business center now uh, who eventually became part of that group she was hired later but, but when she came on board she was very much there. Um, Faye Pritchard who was in Psychology and met with us as well for our, that was largely social for Faye but because it was a social group as well. Just a way to get together and have some camaraderie. I remember the first time my husband and I and Caryn Musil and her husband were invited to a faculty party. It was the first time we integrated apart which is to say they were all male professors and their wives and we walked into the house and all the women were in the living room, all the wives. All the La Salle professors were in the dining room, all the men and there were the four of us and we sort of stood in the archway between the two rooms, the four of us. My husband said, "I'm not gonna go in there with the women and talk about recipes". We didn't know which way to go you just sort of stood there well you know what broke up that dynamic. It eventually, eventually some of the women came over to say hello and some of the men came over and before you knew it the group started disintegrating and there was men and women everywhere and I thought well that's a good thing. But for about ten minutes, it was really awkward to be standing in the middle of that archway. So, some of the reason women got together was social until we became more integrated into the way things happened here. The one thing that was wonderful and I do want to say this for the record were the Brothers. Um, as far as I could see, when the university decided, the college decided to become co-ed, they had to have a big honcho brother come over and from Rome and you know visit the place and everything. Secretaries were told they all got the day off because women weren't supposed to be on the campus of

something but from that decision on, the brothers were extremely welcoming and warm and supportive. Brother President, Brother Provost, the Dean, everybody was, was very welcoming I think to the women here so whatever stress there was did not come from them. They didn't they, they, once they had made that decision, um then they were, we were full partners and frankly, I loved that about La Salle. Even though I had some bumps with some colleagues in the beginning or felt feeling alienated mostly and lonely you know, but uh even though that was true um, the Brothers from you know and Brother um, Daniel Burke<sup>18</sup> who is one of my heroes who was president at the time was just set such a tone such a wonderful tone on this campus of intellectualism and the Brothers' mantra you know of personal involvement with people you know, touching hearts and minds and I think he did that beautifully. I was a real fan of his. He was always accessible for any little thing and Brother Provost who is uh Emery Mollenhauer, still in the English Department uh, was also that way. It was felt that his door was open to me and I could go you know and did go uh, to talk about things with him and issues with him and it was, he was. The brothers are wonderful.

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Aviad: So, most of the tension that you felt came from...

Millard: Some of the men.

Aviad: The teachers that were not part of it.

Millard: Yeah, some of the men who didn't want women here you know. Now I have a theory about that but that's not history. I think, I think generally in our society um, the feminization of a profession means it's degraded. You know, it simply is that the women's professions are paid less and they have less status and I think for men who are college professors to have women coming into their turf in any numbers it becomes very threatening that society won't grant as much prestige. I don't think they think of it actively in those terms but I think that's what's lurking in the background because the few people who did seem to be resistant were people who kept bringing up the fact that I taught in high school and they saw that as a negative, "well she's a high school teacher". Well I always saw it as a positive. I thought it gave me better preparation for working with students at this level to know where they had come from educationally. So, I do think there was some of that issue at play, a kind of insecurity at play. But you know it eventually, it works itself out and I don't think you see that on this campus anymore and haven't for a while.

Aviad: Um, getting back to the early days again with gender. Did you, do you consider yourself a feminist?

Millard: Oh yeah. Not when I came. La Salle radicalized me, really. No and you know I had met sexist behavior all along the way and some of it was really egregious you know being chased around the desk by a crazy person at Penn and things like this. But because it was, it was so covert and I was socialized to accept it, I was socialized in my place. I came from a very traditional ethnic family you know and I knew my place. Uh, it was just when I stepped outside of that

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<sup>18</sup> Brother Daniel Burke, F.S.C. (1926-2015): President of La Salle University from 1969-1976 and founder of the University Art Museum

boundary and that was when I went for the doctorate. Now I was, I was in no man, no woman's land you know that a masters was okay but a doctorate was really pushing the margin. My family weren't sure I was doing the right thing or whatever. And our student who came back said to me um, she went to NYU Law School<sup>19</sup> from La Salle, she's written a book and she was talking about that but she also asked her old professors questions and the one she had for

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me was you know who's your most important mentor, a professional mentor and I had to stop and think I really didn't have one, I didn't. The person who was supposed to be my mentor who was my dissertation advisor said to me and this is when I was finishing my dissertation, he said, "You know, you really can't do this, you can't do it all. You will either destroy your family and be a wonderful professional or you will be good to your family and you'll cheat your students". Now, that just made me more determined to do it all but that was a discouraging kind of message from the man who thought he was giving me good advice. "You can't do it all" and what that said to me was you mean you couldn't do it all. You know you couldn't do both of these, big trouble with his family. You couldn't do both of these things and you're putting this on me but that's, that I by that time I was already at La Salle. I was at La Salle two years before I finished my dissertation and I had bumped into such blatant sexism and it was there before in my life but I just hadn't noticed it as much and, and it is radicalizing you know it just suddenly made me mad and of course the other women around here saying yeah you know the guy chases you around the desk, it's not your fault it's him. And so yes and I suddenly thought yes of course, of course, and so a feminist is simply someone who believes in equal rights for women that's all that means. The word's been demonized but yes, I'm a feminist, I've always been. I just didn't know it until I got here.

Aviad: Um how, how do you think, do you think the um, where do I want to go here. Oh, let's start with this one um, what do you feel with the challenges that you faced when you came here uh, in receiving tenure and promotion as a woman when you began and how do you think that compares to today?

Millard: I think, I think in one sense it's the same today and that is La Salle does ask a lot of its professors. Um, we have a 12-12 teaching load which may not seem like a lot and at one time it was fifteen credits before I got here. But it's kind of rare in higher education today for a college like La Salle that wants its faculty to do what La Salle wants it to do. So, we teach four courses each semester and in let's say St. Joe's<sup>20</sup> or Ursinus<sup>21</sup>, they teach three each semester. Uh, its, at Penn they teach one or two each semester. We also believe here in shared governance which is a wonderful thing and something the faculty does not want to give up which means that we help run the place and that means sitting on a lot of committees and doing real work. The real work of getting, of running things you know whether it's committees in the department on curriculum or whether it's sitting on the university-wide bodies. Um, and I've spent a lot of times, I've been a major committee woman have been just about every committee here the same time they want us to publish as much as say the people at Saint Joseph's or Ursinus or wherever and so since I've been here 35 years this conversation has not

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<sup>19</sup> New York University Law School: oldest law school in New York City established in 1835

<sup>20</sup> St. Joseph's University: private Jesuit university in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; established in 1851

<sup>21</sup> Ursinus College: private liberal arts college in Collegeville, Pennsylvania; established in 1869

changed. The kind, I mean it goes all the way back I mentioned that I was one of the people uh, in a well, brainstorming group that began the faculty development committee we went on a workshop for two or three days at the Roncalli house that some of the brothers have off-campus we literally were there morning, noon, and night, had all of our meals talking about how to organize faculty development on the campus and I was still a very young, new, untenured professor and the argument then is still the argument now. How does one do it all? How do you have a family and a life and teach really well and reach out to your students and

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give them lots of individual attention which is what we want to do and why we're here and serve on the committees which we also care about and publish and have time for research. It becomes very stressful, very stressful and it forces especially junior faculty to try to pick and choose you know to try to prioritize what they're going to do and what they can do well and how to do it. So, that was one of the major issues that hasn't changed. Now, new faculty coming in I understand get three years of 3-3 schedules just to help them get a leg up mostly because they're having trouble hiring people with this schedule and the expectations for research and publication that go along with it. So, that's been, been very stressful I think in terms of adjustment. When I came into La Salle, I think it was, I think it's fair to say that there has been a double standard. I don't think there is anymore but I think that there was and I think that it was very clear to me that I had to do more than most of the men who came up for promotion and tenure. I had to do more than most of them. Their minimum would, could not be my minimum. I wouldn't get it from that minimum. I'm not going to say twice as much because I don't think that. I think that's exploding it but I, but I had to do more and I knew I had to do more and the people would look more closely and that, that's a double bind. This is not just for me, it's always a double bind. You have to do more if you do as much as it's not as good as and if you do more, you're you risk being thought a prima-donna. You know, so if there's a double-edged sword there you have to be better but not too much better. So, so you walk that line essentially and I think that that, I think that was just very clear and it was very clear as advice given to me by some of the women who had gone through it ahead of me here. I sat on the promotion and tenure committee which makes those decisions. Twelve years, I sat there as a faculty member and I sat there as a dean and I saw the change from when I first sat on the committee to my last years as dean on that committee that the double standard has been erased but it took, it took a long while for that to happen that men simply their accomplishments tended to be more valued. More questions were asked of women, there was more skepticism and two, the evaluations. I really have to tell you that having seen thousands and thousands of student evaluations, I think they're harsher for women overall and I think some of that is the reluctance not just male students but even female students are being criticized by females that they find it harder to take. So um, there is that and some of that has been documented by national studies incidentally.

Aviad: This one asked question might not be a fair one, um but I'm going to ask you

Millard: No, I'm not going to answer it

Aviad: Do you think La Salle has achieved equality among the sexes then?

Millard: Oh, much more than it yeah, I think as much as any other place. I think as much as any other place. Uh, that doesn't mean you're not going to find pockets of things but you're not I don't

think you know I, I would tell you if I thought it had only gone underground I don't think it's gone underground. I think there's a, and I think that's also turnover. Colleagues of mine who are 40 years old now were socialized differently they just were. You know they went to college in the 70s and they were part of that change so they just don't come with the same issues. The men who were my age in the department when I came into it tended not to have those issues even then it was some of the older gentlemen who you know the ones who wanted to open the door for me all the time who were also resistant to accepting me you know and so I

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baked pumpkin bread one day and brought it in because I just made a lot. We used to have a coffee room and it was a nice place to gather and yes women do like to foster community and socializing and one of the uh my senior colleagues came and said, "Oh is this why we hired women so we could have pumpkin bread?". You know and it's slighting and he made him then it was a joke and I laughed at it but it's it was always there it was always the little knife edge you know that was coming in but I think the socialization is different and I don't think you would hear the comments that you hear now um there was an infamous faculty meeting when the provost got up in Olney 100. We used to have faculty meetings in there for the whole college and the provost got up and he was it was really about grade inflation and he was reading stats on grades but he also did it by gender because we had just admitted women like three years in or four years in from women being admitted in the undergraduate division and he said and when he was pointing out was that the female students overall had higher GPAs on average than the men and one male colleague stood up and said that's because we're all gentlemen and we are kind to the ladies. You'll never hear nobody could ever say that now nobody would really even think about it that was now you know they might not like it but they would never it would never occur to them to say something like that so I think a lot of that was a different socialization um that people grew up with it was okay to say things like this or even to think things like this and I think that's just I don't think that mode of thought is entirely around anymore. Do men still like to hang out together? Sometimes. Do they support each other and get clubby sometimes? Sure, but so do women. You know that's just human nature. You'll find that in any organization where people of similar interests bond and get a little clubby and cliquy but that I don't think it's necessarily a gender issue.

Aviad: I got some questions here about your professional life. I'd rather skip over to um, talk about work-life balance. Um, what do you think is the proper balance between teaching, service and the research and publishing at La Salle?

Millard: Well, that's just work balance, that's not life balance.

Aviad: Right.

Millard: Okay. Uh, it's very hard and I think I for myself, I think I eventually got to a point because you get older and you get more tired, I got to a point I did everything. I did everything and I will tell you that in the early years when I could still do it, I stayed up all night two nights a week. I never went to bed two nights a week. That's how I got my, my writing done for publication and I'd go right through the night, take a shower, go in, teach you know from home, collapse that night and I did that every week for years because that's how I got the articles written and then I decided I couldn't do that anymore and so I had to shift one way or another. I either

had to give up on some of the committee work and focus you know to get this project done in research or I had I did it the other way around. I took a little break from research, I just got promoted or something and then I would, I would focus more on the committee stuff. So, I was president of the faculty senate for three years, first woman president of the senate and I had to give that more time than I could give my research. I wanted to do a good job. I thought it was important, I simply had to do it but at that point I was a full professor so I could, I simply

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could um because I didn't you know I had done a good body of work. I intended to keep on doing it but I could take a little break and focus that way at that time.

Aviad: Do you think that's still, that's still that kind of balance is still needed today?

Millard: I think people have to make those trade-offs yes, and it's very hard for young faculty who are being mentored because they find that their mentors are saying to them you know you can't say yes to everything, you're gonna have to pick and choose your committees. If the dean asks you maybe you have to say yes but you know you don't have to do this other thing necessarily. You need to apply for grants you know, La Salle does have a grants program so that would help if you got a semester off to do some research you really had to use that time very, very efficiently um to do that or reduction but reductions don't work so you give somebody a course down and then you just have a normal life you know, everything just expands. You don't really feel the impact of that saying oh I've got all this free time to work. It doesn't work that way. One course down it just makes you a little less exhausted. So um, I think people do have to pick and choose. I'm going to you know focus on this task force because it's important but I won't get as much work done. I also had in this sense I was very fortunate there were a lot of my colleagues who had to work every summer. I did not because I was in a two-income family. I could take every summer, almost every summer and not teach so I had my summers for my research. I think the faculty who were really stressed were the ones who because of the pay situation had to work summers and overloads and that, that really created I think an unjust situation which is why the conversation is still going on because they're working hard to make body and the whole body and soul together they can't publish. They can't get promoted they can't get a raise you know it's a vicious circle for them. It really is unless they're willing to be poor for a number of years to get that publication done and there hasn't been a lot of easement on this situation here.

Aviad: Wow um now, now I'd like to talk about the more the, the home life that you were talking about in that balance. Um, I was wondering too, was your husband um, supportive of you while you were going through school?

Millard: Very, he was very supportive, yeah.

Aviad: Um I, I this is I pulled this out of an article that you once uh expressed guilt for being a professional and a mother at the same time and you said the biggest challenge has not been prejudice but a psychology that tells you that you're doing something you shouldn't.

Millard: Yeah.

Aviad: And I'm wondering if you still feel that way.

Millard: Oh, not now, but I did well at the time society was telling me this. I mean we really were in the 60s and 70s the first generation of women to break out. I mean we when we went to college, Dr. [inaudible] was talking about this the other day in a forum. When we went to college, we were all funneled into education I wanted to be there but a lot of my friends didn't particularly want to teach they were pushed there anyway because it was something you could do after

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the children were grown or you could be home at three o'clock. You know so there was just this notion of what was a woman's place and when I went back for the doctorate after I had two children, my mother was nose was out of joint, my mother-in-law's nose was out of joint. I mean my mother-in-law said, "I wish I could live closer to you so the children would have love". You know they couldn't understand and I under, you know it comes with age, it comes later. Uh, at the time I was annoyed by all this but I thought well yes if they've spent their whole lives doing something how can they imagine that I could spend my whole life doing two things. You know and doing them as well as they did them. So yeah it put a lot of guilt on me and so unlike other mothers who bought cupcakes for birthday day you know at the school, I made them from scratch because I had to prove something right. I had these big holiday dinners because I had to prove something. That I could do everything a stay-at-home mother would do as well as my job but I couldn't have done any of it without my father and without some other my father, my husband and without some other people who, who you know a very close friend, a neighbor of mine who uh, helped care for my children that you know made that possible but for the most part um there was a lot of censure and there was on again and some of my colleagues and you probably know that Caryn Musil and I founded Building Blocks<sup>22</sup> and the, the opposition to a day, and it's never been a daycare center. Building Blocks has always been a child development center. It always had an educational basis as an establishment, philosophical basis. There were people here who were adamantly opposed to it because it was "anti-family" in their view. It wasn't neutral, it was, it was you know we were an agency of the devil because we were encouraging the disintegration of families which of course was absurd because at the time, we had a lot of Vietnam Vets<sup>23</sup> here and their wives and they needed daycare. Their wives were supporting them they were in school. They needed that was a facility for students really, as much as I wanted it because I had a daughter who could use it and so did Caryn eventually, not at the time we started it because it made sense to have children in the workplace you know we could eat lunch with them and visit them and just more workplaces should have these facilities. It also made sense for our student needs at the time and women were coming back to school. Now it's, it still serves the La Salle community but it's very much a neighborhood asset. I think at this point in time, it's amazing that it's you know it's twenty-five years old or something, well more than that, thirty-five. So um, balancing, balancing your professional and personal life, was there were no models for it. There were no templates for it you had to invent it as you go and again talking to other women talking about a lot of the women here were single. They were not married, they did not have children that became a kind of new phenomenon with Caryn and me that we had children and we had to figure out a way to do this and it was difficult and it's funny because it changed the culture. Um, I, I remember bringing my children here covertly you know if they

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<sup>22</sup> Building Blocks Learning Center: daycare facility at La Salle University; torn down in 2017

<sup>23</sup> veterans

had a day off for teacher conferences or something. My daughter still remembers as she said being force-fed um various Masterpiece Theater things that I would, I would set her up with the TV and VCR. You know what that time was reel to reel. It was the old day and sit her in my office and she'd watch these tapes all day, I think. I thought I'd have to listen to those tapes but it was you know be very quiet and all of that because you can't, you can't come and you couldn't sit in my classroom. You couldn't even now there are rules about this. Children have to be kept in public places because of the liability but at the time I could keep her in my office

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you know and some colleagues would come in and I'd have lunch with her or whatever in the day and my husband would do, we'd alternate. He'd bring them to his business place as well but we were both breaking the rules when we did that because you know the workplace did not allow for children in any regard. So that was that was very difficult but what I began to notice once my children were in high school and on their way was that how men were bringing their kids in. You know these little kids were at meetings that we'd go to running around on the floor. I didn't dare do that I didn't dare bring them into a meeting you know but the men would or they get up from the meetings and say "I have to go home I have to pick my daughter up from school". You never would have heard that in 1972 but you heard it in 1982. So, the culture changed to be I think more family accepting now but you know.

Aviad: And uh, just wondering about what did your husband do for a living?

Millard: My husband worked in the field of personnel management. He was the vice president for human resources for several companies in the area and then eventually started his own consulting business so.

Aviad: Um, getting back to the Building Blocks. Do you agree that you, you had to knock on doors and...?

Millard: We had to find a place.

Aviad: Yeah, really convince people. I was just wondering what were some of the challenges and how did this kind of you said that there was some opposition, how did that kind of manifest?

Millard: The opposition was from the vice president of student affairs who didn't want the liability and thought it was anti-family which I, as I said I thought that was strange because I went to him first because of the veterans, that we had we had a lot of Vietnam Vets here and um. So I went to the President and met with Brother Daniel [Burke] and Brother Daniel said "I think I can get you some seed money from a private donor if you can find a place, if you can find a space" and so we did we, we went out into the community ad Building Blocks was initially located and I forget if it's Presbyterian<sup>24</sup>, I think it might be Presbyterian. There's a church on 19<sup>th</sup> Street or I'm sorry on Olney Avenue uh, across from the apartments there's a, there was a church I haven't been up there for so long I don't know if it's still there and they had this nice big sunny school room. You know, sinks and everything and um their population there was dwindling their congregation was dwindling and so they saw this as income. They needed the income literally for heat and fuel and things like this. So, if we would pay them rent which

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<sup>24</sup> a religious denomination and member of a Presbyterian Church; originated in Great Britain, specifically Scotland

would help them with their bills, we could have that space five days a week when it was empty because they only used it on the weekends and that worked out pretty well. I mean we I think we maintained a good relationship with them. Um, but I can tell you that for those first two years and La Salle provided for just I think the seed money was pretty much it. Uh, we had to incorporate as a private entity and um, that was that was a big deal and those first two years I was President. Uh, it was a sweat making those payrolls and I sometimes had to pay out of my own pocket to meet payroll, I mean it was just really hard. Um, we tried to keep the

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fees as low as possible because students couldn't afford a whole lot and there were no tax breaks which there are now but they were not at the time. So, after two years, there were some stresses um that began to develop about you know things weren't put away properly and they wanted more money and this that the other thing. Back to the President who we went on a tour of the campus, we found that building over on Wister Street<sup>25</sup> and um, he agreed to let us have that building and then the big challenge was getting it up to code for licensing. So, we had to get it licensed by the city of Philadelphia but we had a wonderful board. The board initially was made up of La Salle people, many of whom were never going to use the center. You know, didn't have any particular interest but, but understood the social necessity of it and uh, believed in it and therefore gave free time, free accounting services, you know free lobbying down at licensing and whatever down to Philadelphia. Um, free expertise in uh interviewing people for the position of director and drawing up all kinds of uh regulations for the operation center management people I mean it was really wonderful because it was literally built by La Salle and created by La Salle expertise. The education department became involved sending students for practicum and things like that working projects with the kids VSE Program<sup>26</sup> that was great. You know eventually the Psych department also got involved in sending students for practicum and volunteer time and things like this and so and fundraisers we did lots and lots of fundraisers. Building Blocks isn't as visible as it used to be but we were always raising money with bake sales and raffles over in the union<sup>27</sup> and doing all kinds of things and it was exclusively La Salle and it was a big issue to open it to the community. It was that was a big debate we had several retreats and workshops about opening it to the community and once it was open to the community, a whole different set of things went into operation sliding scale charges and things like this and the community seemed to demand more and more from La Salle. It was already providing space, all the energy costs, telephone all the utilities security what they didn't do was pay any salaries because we were privately incorporated and they didn't offset any tuition and people wanted that too but other than that uh, it worked out and I think I think Building Blocks has been an asset in the neighborhood. There were other centers that Einstein<sup>28</sup> for example looked at our center as a model when they wanted to open one as a child development center not just as a place to park kids and so there, there still continues to be involvement on the part of La Salle people if they bring their children there they usually get onto the board. I was shocked to find out a couple of days ago it's 650 dollars a month for La Salle people that's with 10 percent a discount. Well childcare is very, very expensive but as I said, it was it that also had to change hearts and minds. You know when people thought it was anti-family.

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<sup>25</sup> at La Salle University, Philadelphia

<sup>26</sup> Voluntary Support of Education Program

<sup>27</sup> Student Union at La Salle University

<sup>28</sup> Einstein Medical Center Philadelphia: largest independent academic medical center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Aviad: I'm wondering if you can elaborate on that maybe that's uh like you said philosophically over time, I'm just wondering how that could be construed?

Millard: I think well it goes all the way back to the fifties. It goes back to stereotypes and generalizations about communism. You know this is considered left-wing that the communists um in the communist system men and women worked and they had Daycare Centers so there

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were communists, it was communist to do that. In a good capitalist society men work, women stay home which was the middle class goal of the 50s and you know the kids aren't parked in centers where they learned you know they don't learn to be as competitive they're more cooperative. Um it was there were a whole network of values at issue here including that the idea of cooperation rather than competition so there were studies that were done between you know soviet culture, children and our children as to you know who was more independent and who wasn't independent. Yeah, they were more collaborative and we were more independent okay they're just two different things but you know some people saw it in black and white or red and white I guess I should say and some of it was, was just old-fashioned, uh ethnic or catholic or conservative that says you know a woman's place in the home and if you put children out in any kind of other environment, you're harming the children. My daughter thinks of her Building Blocks days very fondly but um there are others who you know and that particular vice president was adamant about it. It's true about the liability and we had insurance and all that but I mean that was a legitimate concern but the whole idea of being anti family if, if you have parents working period isn't better to have the children nearby? Isn't it better? You would think so. But from a different kind of mindset you know, this is the beginning of the end and until very recently I, it's only been recently that I haven't heard criticism about you know parking kids and daycare and actually it's still out there. There's what they call the war between the stay-at-home mommies and the working mommies and they you know insult each other back and forth or blame each other back and forth. They do it in women's magazines. They do it on talk shows and it still comes you know you farmed out your children as one woman said you farmed out your children why have children if you're going to farm them out I'd say well first of all I think any child being locked up with me for twenty-four hours a day would go nuts. You know I'm not sure that's, that's a healthy thing for a child but I, I was home with my children for short periods of time and I was desperate to find play groups for them because they got bored because we don't grow up in environments like I grew up in, in cities where everybody went out the street and played you don't play in the suburbs on the street. Everybody plays in their family room you know little enclaves. You have to find groups for your children or they don't have any socialization so what's wrong with that. You know, most women now send their stay-at-home send their kids to a nursery school just so they'll have that experience of socialization with others learn to share and other important social values. So, um I think it was a very old-fashioned way of thinking that it was linked to everything else do women belong here you know um, do women belong in the workplace even if their husbands are Vets and trying to get an education? You know, why should we help this along? Why should we be in this business? You know so it got, it got a little dicey sometimes. There were special things I wasn't as involved as some of the other women with women coming into the evening division most of the women who were coming back to school had put their brothers and their husbands through school in the fifties and sixties. Many of them were my friends. Just to give you background, at West Philadelphia Catholic High School

I was in a class of eight-hundred-fifty girls. Eight-hundred-fifty graduated the same year as me. Fewer than fifty of us went on to any kind of secondary or post-secondary education any kind two-year colleges, nursing school, fewer than fifty out of eight-hundred-fifty. And they're apparently they weren't allowed to accept scholarships they weren't allowed to apply they had to go to work and they had to help contribute toward putting brother through college or whatever or just help pay the bills in large families. So, these women were ready, they were ready to go back to school. You know their kids were in school their husbands were doing well

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and they wanted degrees. That was true of a lot of the faculty wives too, could get it free at La Salle it came back but they had issues about balancing their study from the demands of their studies with their children and raising their children about their neighbors' feelings about this you know, about their husbands. Not all of them you know were supportive and some of whom felt a little threatened by this. And so, um we finally convinced the administration they needed some special counsel at night for these students. They needed a lounge room; they needed a place for them. They needed some accommodation for them to understand that they were going to have a tougher period of adjustment having been away from school for a certain number of years than guys who were coming to evening division and working during the day and that again that was a mindset they couldn't understand. You know this was just molly coddling or something but, but it paid off it was good for those women they were successful they remember it well and hopefully sent their kids to a school and encouraged their kids to come to La Salle later on. All part of the transition but that was a big transition for the country in the 70's, women going back to school, older women. It kept the women's colleges alive. They would have collapsed otherwise.

Aviad: I have a lot of questions about your deanship and all that stuff but I'm thinking if I save that for...

Millard: Yeah.

Aviad: Another time and it's getting late. So, we could do that on the follow-up so let's just we can end it on a uh I will cause this thing but you can bring in the Royal Shakespeare Company in here and all that stuff. Just to give you an idea uh for the next time.

Millard: Yeah.

Aviad: Um, but I did hear that you love to cook.

Millard: Yeah.

Aviad: I, I have this as my last question here just because I was just wondering what is your favorite dish?

Millard: Oh gosh, there's many. That's hard. Probably paella<sup>29</sup>, probably paella but uh another little bit of Lasallian history. We put out a cookbook for Building Blocks called "Cooking by Degrees" and all the recipes were submitted by faculty.

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<sup>29</sup> Spanish rice dish originally from Valencia, Spain

Aviad: Women? Men too?

Millard: Men and women, men and women and I have a copy at home I'm just wondering if I still have one in the office. I had a copy at home and several of us still have them that we've used all these years because some of the recipes are really neat. Brother Geoff or uh brother he was a brother, Geoff Kelly in the Religion Department for example of course I think it was tongue and cheek

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he gave us this enormous recipe for venison that you, you put the whole you know carcass of the deer and in a butter. I think its scotch whiskey and you marinate it. But "Cooking by Degrees" was the academic thing so we had you know the Baccalaureate degree recipes and the Associate degree recipes and the master's degree recipes and I did it with Brother Joseph Burke. He was in the Psychology Department. He was a former president of the university; I don't know if you know that. Yes, Brother Joseph Burke has, has been president of La Salle. He's now directing graduate program in Psychology and um he and I were on the board of Building Blocks together and he, he is an excellent chef, he's an excellent chef and we got into this kind of informal competition uh, whereas he said you know our friends are benefiting from this. I'd have a dinner that he'd have a dinner and they kind of play us off against one another in this competition. So, we finally got together and said let's do something about this and we put together this cookbook. It was a great fundraiser for Building Blocks, paella.

Aviad: And Brother Joe didn't even know about that? The cookbook or any of that.

Millard: Oh, he didn't know? Oh, then you should have one for the La Salle Archives.

Aviad: Yeah. I was thinking...

Millard: I'm trying to remember if I have any more because I found them when we were moving about five years ago. I had a whole box of them and I said "hey you need one?" and they said, "yeah I still use that mine is falling apart" and I sort of gave them out so I don't know if I have anymore. I think they'd be in here if I did. Anyway.

Aviad: Oh, well.

Millard: That's the cooking.

Aviad: Thank you for your time then and uh like I said, we can because we haven't even covered the deanship or anything with the Senate. All these questions so we can cover that at the followup interview.

Millard: Okay. I'm talked out.

Aviad: Yeah, I think...

**End: 01:07:04**

Dr. Barbara Millard, Interviewed by Aviad Adlersberg  
La Salle University, March 15, 2007