

Interviewee: Melinda Marchand  
Interviewers: Kristi McCarthy, Kailyn Hart  
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**Abstract:** Melinda Marchand was born in 1968 in Newton, Massachusetts. She first arrived to Worcester in 1990 after graduating from Syracuse University and was hired by a company, 440 Financial Group. While working at 440 Financial Group, she attended Northeastern University to obtain a certificate in technical writing and software programming. After this accomplishment, she decided to pursue her master's degree in history. She attended Harvard University's Continuing Education program. After this, she attended Clark University's Graduate School in the History doctoral program. She now works at Clark University as a Professor of History. When asked about what characteristics make Worcester unique, she responded that she believes the diversity is the largest factor. She also believes the political history is also one of the primary traits that makes Worcester unique. Melinda is a mother of two children, Eleri and Griffin and is very involved with her students and her work at Clark University. She enjoys teaching and writing about history as well as continuing her research in history.

**KM:** Do we have your permission to record your oral history?

**MM:** Yes.

**KM:** Ok. Great. So, what is your first name. . .your full name, including both maiden name and married name if applicable?

**MM:** Melinda Marchand and I didn't change my name when I got married, so that was my maiden name and my current name. Most people call me Mindy, that's my nickname.

**KM:** What. . .when were you born? Sorry.

**MM:** 1968.

**KM:** Have you ever married?

**MM:** Yes.

**KM:** What is the name of your husband?

**MM:** Stephen.

**KM:** Do you have children?

**MM:** I do, I have two children, Eleri and Griffin. And they... she is 15, he is 13.

**KM:** Do you have grandchildren?

**MM:** No [laughs].

**KM:** What cultures/ ethnicities do you identify with?

**MM:** We're sort of a mixed. My family is primarily French-Canadian, Irish, English and Welsh. My husband's family is primarily German and a few other things, a little bit here and there.

**KM:** Ok. Tell me about your parents.

**MM:** Ok. My parents are Nancy and Jerry Marchand, they are currently in their mid-seventies. They both were—they're crazy, perfect parents actually [laughs]. They both had very full careers. My dad was a police officer. He was also—he's a brilliant guy, he could have done anything. He picked police officer because he really was passionate about protecting people and serving the common good. But he happens to be also an amazing investor, he's really great with wood working, he builds furniture, he's just got crazy skills all over the place. And my mom, similarly, she had gone to school to be a med tech [medical technician] and then she left and stayed home with myself and my siblings for a number of years. And she went back to work, ended up becoming the COO [Chief Operating Officer] of a small retirement services company. And she and my dad, very complementary, artistically. Where he would build furniture, she can sew, she can cook gourmet meals, they're both avid gardeners and their house has been on the garden tour in the town that they live in.

**KM:** Oh wow.

**MM:** They're just very—and they're wonderful parents. As I said, I have three siblings and we always just admired our parents and learned a really strong work ethic from them and values. Just how to try lots of different things and find what you're passionate about and persevere. Yeah, so they're great parents.

**KM:** Great. Where have you lived during your life?

**MM:** I have not strayed too far. I grew up in Newton, Mass [Massachusetts], which is not too far from here, right outside of Boston [Massachusetts]. And I went to undergraduate school at Syracuse [University], so I was in upstate New York for four years. Came back to Newton, where I'd grown up and lived there through a variety of jobs. And when my husband and I got married we lived there briefly, then we moved to Southboro, [Massachusetts], which is just a

little ways away. And from there to Hopkinton [Massachusetts], I think that's it. I really haven't gone. . . .

**KM:** So, when did you arrive in Worcester [Massachusetts]?

**MM:** Twice [laughs]. Twice. So, the first time was when I graduated from Syracuse. And at the time, I had wanted to become a historian and a professor. But I could not at the time because I needed to start paying my student loans. And so, I went home and I started looking for a job. And there was a company that was a start-up company in Worcester. They were under the State Mutual umbrella. I think the State Mutual Insurance building is still there, but I don't think the insurance company is, on Lincoln Street? 440 Lincoln Street? Might not venture out that way.

**KH:** Maybe [laughs].

**MM:** So, it was a huge insurance company at the time and there were some businessmen from Fidelity who decided to start this—it's called a mutual fund transfer agent—process mutual fund transactions. And they started this company with 40 people and they hired about 32 college grads, so me and 31ish others were hired to be the labor force for this company. And we had to learn how to process mutual fund transactions, how mutual funds worked, client service types of things, all aspects of this financial services company. And, so, it was in Worcester [and] I commuted from Newton to Worcester for—it ended up being about three years. I was at Lincoln Street for the first year and we worked like dogs. We worked about 60-70 hours a week. It was nice because we were all the same age, relatively. And so, we would work 15 hours a day and then we would go to Leitrim's. Is that still there?

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**KH:** Yeah. It is.

**MM:** It's probably still the same as it was back in 1990. We would go to Ralph's. Is that still there?

**KH:** I'm not. . .

**MM:** Oh sadness! [laughs] They had live bands at Ralph's and there was a diner. I think it was connected to it and it had amazing burgers that you could get at like two in the morning. So, it was a great experience. And we all got very close to one another because we spent so much time together. We ended up going away on weekends together, I mean, lots, probably a dozen of the 32. We had a softball team. And my husband was on the softball team, that's how we met. That's how I got my first softball injury [laughs]. It was a black eye from pitching. And it's been 28 years so I guess was due for another one.

**KH:** [laughs] Yup.

**MM:** So, that was my first connection to Worcester in the 90s at 440 Financial Group, where I stayed—I was there for about a year. I had thought, “Well you know, I’ll do this business thing for about a year and then I will think about going back to school to become a historian.” A year went by, I got a big promotion, I was moved to West Boylston [Massachusetts] which really didn’t feel like a promotion because it’s a teeny town. I don’t know if you’ve been there.

**KM:** Yeah. It is. It’s very small.

**MM:** It’s very small and we were maybe the one business there. And there were not many people. So, I stayed there for a couple of years and then I left, and lost my connection to Worcester until 2012, when I was applying to grad school and moving into my second career. And I looked into the Clark [University] history program and it was such a perfect fit for me. I was excited to go there and become reconnected with Worcester. So, all twenty-ish years in between.

**KM:** Great. Do you have other family members that live in the Worcester area?

**MM:** Well, my husband was from Holden [Massachusetts], which is the Worcester area. And his parents and his sister still lives in Rutland [Massachusetts], which I think we would consider Worcester area. Other than that, no. And I had, frankly, even though I grew up in Newton, I didn’t really know Worcester existed until I was a teenager and I went to my first concert here. Bryan Adams. Do you even know who that is?

**KM:** [laughs] Yeah.

**KH:** [laughs] Nope.

**MM:** I don’t know if he’s still alive or what he does. [laughs] And we came to Worcester for that and that was the only connection I had before I got my first job here.

**KM:** So, what challenges do you think this city still faces? And, what would you change about the city?

**MM:** Ugh, Worcester. It’s such a diamond in the rough isn’t it? I love Worcester and through the years, once I got more familiar with it, from the first concert on, and working here—working here was wonderful because we really tried to sort of embrace the city. Clearly through the bar scene when we were in our early twenties. And then, when my husband and I got married, we were still did come out here to go to the Worcester Art Museum. We had a friend who ended up on the board of the Worcester Art Museum. And so, we would come out for that. And then, there was a period of time where there was an outlet mall that was built and we would come out for that. And I feel like there were all these iterations of trying to really revitalize the city. And

things did not quite stick. I'm really hoping that having that baseball team come is going to be the clincher.

**KM:** Yeah.

**MM:** I'm not sure if you're familiar with that. But I also think working now at Clark and I worked a little bit with other organizations in Worcester that there needs to be more connectivity between the schools, the students in the schools. I mean these are the people who are really in a position to help grow Worcester. And Worcester has such great history and such great institutions and really interesting architecture. I think that the schools could really take a big lead in that.

**KM:** And what changes have you seen in Worcester over time?

**MM:** Well, like I said, there have been these few, you know, iterations of trying to revamp, like bringing that outlet mall in. Which didn't last. Outlet malls don't seem to last anywhere though.

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** And you know, well the train station, was a big thing. Redoing the train station. Although I don't take the train, I'm familiar with that. Other than that, I really only see the things that I'm engaged in through the schools. So, I don't know what other approaches have been taken. I know that projects like this, where the students are reconnecting with the community and we try at Clark also to connect the students to the Worcester Historical Museum and the Historical Society and the museum and that helps, I think.

**KM:** Absolutely. Yeah. What distinct characteristics make Worcester the place that it is?

**MM:** I think its diversity. Even comparing it to Boston's claim to fame—and I come at this from the history perspective, but Boston's claim to fame is so revolutionary. Right? It's all about colonial America and through the Revolution and people are drawn to Boston from a tourist standpoint because of those, sort of, austentatious aspects of American history. And I think that what Worcester has to offer that is still slowly but surely being uncovered are much more varied experiences. There's great diversity in terms of the immigration story here. And Worcester was just such a political place in the 18th century, 19th century that people are maybe not as aware of. And I think it has a lot more stories, I mean even the 'smiley face.' If you go outside of Worcester you don't know that the smiley face was introduced in Worcester. I think it just has a lot more variety that needs to be capitalized on.

**KM:** What do you think women's experiences in Worcester have been, generally?

**MM:** Let's see, well outside of academia, I don't know if I could really answer that too well.

**KM:** What about in terms of academia?

**MM:** I know if I think back to when I worked at 440 Financial in the 90s, one thing that Worcester definitely offered women—State Mutual is a huge insurance company, it offered women tremendous opportunity for jobs that were not necessarily jobs where you need to have a college degree. But there was a lot of different kinds of data entry and processing jobs, that were business jobs, clerical, administrative, that were available for tons of women in the Worcester area that was probably a great opportunity for lots of people. In terms of coming forward to now, to my experience in academia, I love that a lot of students, at Clark are actually not too far away from Worcester. I don't know if this is true at Assumption, too. Clark tends to have a lot—I wouldn't say a majority, even, but it does tend to have a lot of students from the local area, which is great. And the schools can offer different programs to the Worcester community. And I'm sure that all of the schools in the Consortium do that, even if the student body isn't drawn primarily from Worcester.

**KM:** Yeah, definitely. Yeah- no I think- at least at Assumption there is a lot of students that are from the general area.

**MM:** Are there?

**KM:** I would say so.

**KH:** So, where—well, you talked about you attended Syracuse University, but, did you—you went to Clark for grad school, right?

**MM:** Yup.

**KH:** And, so is there anywhere else you went?

**MM:** Yes. I love being a student. [laughs] So, I went to Syracuse, I graduated in 1990 from Syracuse.

**KH:** Ok.

**MM:** And then when I was working in business, I was working out here in Worcester. And then I became a consultant, and then I moved into financial services and I worked in a number of different places. While I was doing that, my jobs were very much computer-software oriented. So, I went to Northeastern [University] to get a certificate in technical writing and software programming. And then, when I decided that I had a really great opportunity to go back to school for what I had originally wanted to do, which was to become a historian, I went to Harvard's Continuing Ed program to get my master's degree. And then on to Clark. I think that's everywhere.

**KH:** [laughs] Ok. What were your challenges in education?

**MM:** Let's see. Well, I think the greatest challenge I had was when I was deciding what to do with my life the first time around. And when I was applying to colleges for undergraduate, I knew I loved history at the time, but for some reason, I did not think that I wanted to pursue a degree in history right out of the get-go. I thought I wanted to be a photojournalist because at the time I was very interested in photojournalism. And so, I applied—which is one of the reasons I applied to Syracuse because they have a really great photojournalism school, the Newhouse School. And then when I got there and I realized at the time, that was not going to be a good career for me. I was way too introverted to go have my camera in people's faces and interviewing them. That was just not going to work.

**KH:** [laughs] Yeah.

**MM:** And then I had thought, “Well I want to go travel the world so I'll go be an international relations major and then I'll become a diplomat or something,” and as I was trying to figure that out, I started taking some history courses and realized, “Well, this is crazy,” because I knew I loved history when I got there and now this was confirming to me. So when I graduated, I ended up with a degree in International Relations and a minor in History. One of my history professors had asked me to stay and keep working on my research. And I couldn't because as I mentioned, I needed to get paying those loans. So, I think the first challenge I had, education-wise was just figuring out what I wanted to do and narrowing it down. And I think that's probably something that a lot of people contend with. And in hindsight, now that I've had two careers, I feel like it's so crazy, it doesn't really matter what you pick because you really should have multiple careers, you know? You should give yourself the freedom to not feel pigeonholed into your first career, you should explore lots of things. You have many, many years to work. And I think other than that, the only other challenge, education-wise that I've had is going back to school at my age, just finding the time. Because it's not quite the same pulling an all-nighter when you're in your forties [laughs] as it was when you're in your twenties. Although, I don't think I was very successful at it, even when I was your age. But more successful than now.

**KH:** So, when you finished your education at Syracuse, what did you see as your options going forward?

**MM:** When I left Syracuse, I felt like there weren't a lot of options right away. I knew I just needed to find a job and I went on a huge interviewing spree and it was 1990, the economy was not that great. And I turned down a job offer I got in New York, I remember this, for \$24,000 a year, thinking that was so low. Only to end up accepting the job in Worcester [Massachusetts] for \$17,500 a year.

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** [laughs] The economy was not good. So, I didn't feel—and I think most of my peers felt similarly—that we didn't really have a lot of options, we just needed to get jobs and then make the best of it. So, in terms of short-term, just needed to make some money. But I always had an idea that there's a long-term and the options are unlimited. And I knew that at some point, I would either find the niche within that industry that really resonated for me or that I would move on or both. And actually, both happened. I loved financial services for a very long time, it was a great industry to be in.

**KH:** What support networks and mentoring have been important to you and guiding you?

**MM:** Mmmm. That's a great question. Professionally, I've had a couple of great mentors. The first couple jobs I had, I did not have anyone that really felt like a strong mentor. But, when I started working for a company called, The Boston Company, that's a financial services company, too. And this was probably, I might have been 23 or 24. And my boss at the time was an excellent mentor and was really empowering for myself and other employees. She challenged us, she gave us really difficult and exciting work to do. And really helped me figure out what my strengths were in that industry, which was research and writing, which is where I've ended up, so that was really an interesting place to be. And she was such a great role model. She left to go to another company called Scutter, I followed her there, another peer of mine also—the three of us worked very well together as a team—followed her there, to Scutter. And then I went to another company that was a start-up and they followed me there. So, it was great. And we still keep in touch and we still have a great business and personal relationship, the three of us. Pat was a great role model in terms of helping me sort of figure out how to make that industry exciting for myself and to challenge myself and make the most of it. And when I switched to academia, when I left, I had the most amazing advisor at Harvard. She was in the American Studies department there and she was phenomenal in terms of helping me fine tune my writing and really to make the transition to academia from the business world because it's so different. And then when I left, when I graduated from Harvard, the first person I met—I just sent a bunch of resumes to schools that would just hire you with just master's degree and this woman at Mass Bay Community College, Jane O'Brien, called me a week before their semester started and said, "Can you come in to interview? Because we have openings here, we need to hire someone." And I went in and I had just gotten my master's that summer. And she actually called me when I was on vacation, and I came in and she went through my resume, asked me some interview questions and then she said, "Okay, we'd like to hire you and can you teach three classes starting next week?"

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** I was like, "Oh my gosh, I don't have syllabi." One was World History, one was U.S. History, which was my thing, but it was all over the place. And so, I was thinking, "I don't know if I really can do this," and she was wonderful and was from that moment on as long as I knew her. She was like, "Yes, you can. Of course you can. You just got your degree, this is what you want to do, go figure it out." And so, I went home in that one week and I created three courses and I bounced them off of her and she gave me feedback, good ideas, and then she came in to



mentor my classes, mentor me, through observing my classes that fall and was just a tremendous role model. She was one of those people that would never let you think you could not do something. She was very, very empowering. And when I was telling her, “I’m planning to go get my PhD so that I can teach at a four-year school,” she said, “Of course you can! Exactly. You have to do it, you need to get your applications going right away, I’m going to start writing your recommendation.” And she just powered me through the process and helped me with that. And then, very sadly, she passed away two years later. I think she actually left Mass Bay and was at one of the Worcester schools. Maybe it was Worcester State [College], I don’t think it was here. She was the Dean, so I think that she was at Worcester State she was the Dean and she got sick suddenly and passed away. She was an amazing role model because she was in her seventies, traveling the world constantly, she was the Dean, and she taught classes at other institutions because she loved to teach.

**KM:** Wow.

**MM:** And was doing her research. And she was just someone that really emulated, be all that you can be. So, she was a great role model. So, those have been my amazing role models. Pat Hagarmen, Amanda Claybog was my Harvard advisor, and Jane O’Brien. And then my husband, who I met way back in Worcester in 1990 has just always been the most supportive of all of my crazy ideas. When I was working, I was traveling a lot when I was in financial services and he would be the one that tried to keep his job 9-5, so that someone could come home and be with our kids. And then when my company—I had this amazing opportunity to leave because we were bought and I said, “You know, I’m thinking this is when I should go back to school,” he was like, “Yeah, okay.” [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** And he’s always very supportive and very encouraging. And so that’s it’s wonderful.

**KH:** Awesome. Do you want to do the next one?

**KM:** Sure

**KM:** So, your first job was at 440 Financial?

**MM:** Yup, yup.

**KM:** Okay, so your job now how did you come to do this, this work?

**MM:** I was in financial services, from 440 I went to a few companies. The last one I was at was called the McGregor Group and it was a start up, I was the eighteenth employee and I was there for about eleven years. And it was a phenomenal experience. We built software systems for investment management firms who were trading on behalf of their clients, stocks, bonds,

derivatives etcetera. It was very exciting, very dynamic and I loved it, but while I was working there I traveled a lot. I spent quite a bit of time in New York and then I traveled all over the country and my husband and I had decided we were going to have our children which we did at the same time—our two children—and so then our company decided to sell the company. We missed the whole dot com, could have made bazillions of dollars.

**KM, KM and MM:** Laughs

**MM:** We were right after that but we still it was a pretty fairly lucrative deal. Enough that I said this is a great time for me to take a break from this and go back to—I could have stayed and probably would have been very happy in financial services forever, but I always came back to wanting to be a historian. So, that was when I left and went back to school and that was—I forget what year I started—in the mid-2000s, 2008 or 9. Took me four years to finish my master's degree which I finished in 2012. And then I got the job offer from Jane at Mass Bay and I started teaching there and looking around at other history programs and I knew I wanted to go to Clark and so once I came in and had an interview with a couple people from the Clark History Department I didn't even pursue my other applications. When I got accepted into Clark's history [doctoral] program that was wonderful, perfect. Last year they asked me if I would teach some courses because they knew I had taught at Mass Bay. I have been teaching at Mass Bay for 7 years now and even though I'm still technically a graduate student I have advanced student standing so I started teaching at Clark as well.

**KM:** Great. What has your work at Clark meant to you?

**MM:** Everything [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [Laughs]

**MM:** Almost everything. Except for what my family means to me. It's wonderful because [pause] the students. I'm sure they are similar student body here right are phenomenal I love working with undergraduate students. I think that it's such a great learning experience for me to be interacting with people of your generation and I love teaching. I teach writing history, I teach U.S history, I teach women's history and I'm very passionate about my subject matter. I love my students, I love my subject matter, and my dissertation which is the other element of my job at Clark. I'm writing an intellectual and cultural biography of a woman who was a 19th century reformer who spent time in Boston and in Worcester which is really cool and I didn't realize how many synergies there would be when I started working on this project. But I'm very passionate about that and the things that she tried to accomplish for women that really have been swept under the rug because no one has really ever heard of her. Her name is Caroline Dall. Have you heard of her in your Women's Studies classes?

**KM:** No

**MM:** See. [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** So, she's a real character. She really believed that women needed to be empowered to work even more importantly than they needed to be empowered to vote and so she spent a lot of time trying to find ways for women to become professionals in a lot of industries and ways for working-class women to have more fulfilling work themselves. She's really an interesting character.

**KM:** Yeah. What are your primary responsibilities in terms of housework and child care?

**MM:** Oh, that's a great question too.

**KM:** [laughs]

**MM:** Isn't it funny how we think about that. My husband and I have a really balanced partnership. We split the cooking and it really just depends on who has time to actually do the cooking. We both have our specialties. He is the king of meat. Spaghetti and meatballs is one of his fortes. I, my daughter and I are very much more interested in more healthy food.

**KM and KH:** [laugh]

**MM:** So, we make a lot of vegetarian dishes and things like that, but we all we all enjoy cooking. But my husband and I share the cooking, some things we have just picked our jobs based upon what works. I do the laundry and I won't let anyone else touch it.

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** Just because I'm kind of type A about getting it through the dryer and folding it. I really don't care from a gender standpoint who does it but no one else folds it so that's my thing. I also hate the noise of the ride on lawn mower, so he can have that. [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** He does that. He likes to sit. I think he puts a beer in the cupholder. And rides around the lawn. But we share half and half. Right now my kids are at an age where they need a lot of driving. So we call ourselves their ubers.

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** We split that as much as we can depending upon our work schedules. I try to have my kids involved as much as possible in house work too because I think it's important even when you

can afford to have someone clean your whole house or you are lucky to have that happen you have to know how to take care of yourself. I don't want to send them off to college and they will be the sloppy roommate, right?

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** So, we all do housework and yard work and, and then we just have these funny things where I prefer the laundry and Steve prefers the lawn.

**KM:** How have you balanced different priorities, responsibilities, roles and interests in your life?

**MM:** Mmmm, it's always hard right? And I feel like it's so interesting for women. When I first started working and people would always use that mantra for woman—you can't have it all. You can't have your career and have a family and have your interests and I think people need to—women—you women.....

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** ....need to not worry about that and step away from that whole mantra because you can as long as you're adaptable and flexible and you know when things need to shift in priority, right? You can have a wonderful, fulfilling career and I think every woman should. And you can have a family. And for me there have been times when I was working in financial services there were times when I realized I was spending too much time at work. For a while I had for one year, I had a nanny and I came home one day and she had cut Eleri's hair.

**KH:** [gasp]

**MM:** Eleri was not quite one and her hair had never been cut [hits table] and I was horrified.

**KM and KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** I thought oh my gosh, I felt so guilty that I missed this milestone. And my wonderful nanny, Jennifer, was like, "Look, doesn't she look beautiful?" And I'm like, "Oh my gosh!" [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [laugh]

**MM:** But that was one instance. We had a nanny for one year when Steve and I were both working a tremendous amount. And then we tried different options and it took us a few years to sort of get a groove when I was in that time. We worked a ton of hours in that phase and we just figured out if he worked less—he worked nine to five. I worked seven to whenever and I traveled a lot. And then things shifted and we tried to be cognizant of that and figure out how to give our—each of us different opportunities and I mean clearly we're lucky because clearly some

people don't have the flexibility if you are a single parent you have even less flexibility or opportunity to do that. But right now, he is in a place where he is really enjoying learning some new things at his job and he recently got a promotion and so he's all in in terms of working. I do more of the Uber driving and I mean it's very it's much more flexible in terms of teaching at a college. And it means if I'm doing more things related to child care then I'm doing less writing on my dissertation, but it's fine.

**KM and KH:** [laugh]

**MM:** Because things keep fluctuating and eventually that will wrap itself up. I think it's important to try to work in some interests as well as your professional interests too. I mean I play softball, [laugh] which maybe this year I'll switch to a different sport.

**KM and KH:** [laugh]

**MM:** But I try to run and I do things—my children and I like to go hiking. And so we just try to fit things in where we can without trying to get bogged down in what the balance actually is.

**KM:** What do you think are the pros and cons of the path you have chosen?

**MM:** That's a good question too.

**KM:** [laughs]

**MM:** The pros and the cons, well the biggest con that I do laugh about very frequently is when I left financial services, I left a very lovely salary. [laughs]

**KM and KH:** [Laughs]

**MM:** That will just never happen again in academia. But as much as I loved that career, I did not love it as much as I love, love, love being a historian and working with my students and writing and I think that I will do this until I'm ninety if possible. And so that is the biggest con is that our lifestyle had to change fairly dramatically when I did this even though I had—I just mentioned my company was sold. I had a chunk of change to use towards this. It's still a dramatically different lifestyle from what we were accustomed to from that standpoint. But it has had really crazy other benefits as well. One that I think about a lot is the fact that my kids and I will sit down and do homework together very frequently and we talk about history and that gets us talking about other topics and so I think they're great students. They would have been great students without this, but it gives us another whole dimension to our parent child relationship. Having us all do homework and have deadlines and I had tests and we all have papers due and so that has been very cool. And I do think that having me very immersed in history, has given them maybe a different appreciation of it than they might have otherwise had. So those are some really interesting pros. I mean the pros are just being passionate about what you do to. And my

kids were lucky and unlucky enough to see having our income change dramatically, to be affected by that. They weren't that young that they didn't sort of make the connection between moms around a lot more and we just aren't traveling the way we used to or whatever. But I think that's been good for them too because it's important for people, for kids to understand what do you want priorities to be in life? And I want them to have priorities that are impactful lives, and lives that feel fulfilling to them over material lives.

**KM:** How do you feel about the choices you've made in your life? Do you have any regrets?

**MM:** Hmm any regrets? I'm sure I do right?

**KM and KH:** [laugh]

**MM:** I just have that like brain freeze. Regrets, regrets, regrets. Well, I mean I think I'm very lucky to not have any major regrets. But in the scheme of things, trying to fit in everything, I will say that there have been periods like when I was working, both when I was working in financial services for a few years and in positions where I was actively trying to get a promotion and similarly the first couple years when I was doing my coursework for the PhD where I had such an intense focus on my work. That I lost touch with some key friends, key relationships for a couple years at a time and I regret not trying to keep those things intact and sometimes now I do feel like I'm trying to reconnect. Well, I don't feel like it, I am trying to reconnect with people I lost touch with. During those like super crazy periods of my existence and I'm sure if I think about it both of those when I was super focused on part of work in financial services or you know trying to stay up all night trying to finish papers at Clark, I'm sure that I should regret the lack of patience [laughs] I displayed with my family. I'm quite sure that I was irritable and moody and different.

**KH:** [laughs]

**MM:** But I don't have any major regrets. I actually try to—part of my own personal sort of mantra is to not really regret things because I feel for all of us you make your decisions and we all make some incredibly bad decisions, but even the incredibly bad ones you end up learning from and they help direct you to your next set of decisions that you can make. So, I think it's important to not get bogged down and regretting too much.

**KH:** How did you get through tough times? And what kind of thoughts like kept you going?

**MM:** You know my family, my immediate family, the four of us, are not—we're not really religious. My husband and I are both raised, he was raised an Episcopalian and I was raised as a Catholic. When we got married we thought we really wanted to sort of find some kind of shared religious faith because we believe at some level in [pause] goodness, being good people et cetera. But we don't really have deep religious faiths and so we tried to join a Unitarian church. Well, we thought that's a place that's open to all kinds of denominations, open to all kinds of

beliefs, maybe that would be somewhere we would find support for when you do go through hard times. We just, we just neither one of us could commit to organized religion. It just did not feel right to us. So, when we have hard times, we don't have a particular religious faith to go to but we sort of rely on each other. I would say my husband and I rely on each other and our extended family and our friends. You know this summer, my accident was not in any means like a big tragedy, but it was amazing. I was out of commission for six to eight weeks between a concussion and fractured jaw and my mouth was wired shut. [laughs]

**KM:** Oh my gosh.

**MM:** It was kind of crazy but I mean it wasn't a huge tragedy, but our family and our friends would bring us dinner and they would just check in to see how I was feeling and did the kids need anything and it's amazing just to have that kind of support group from your friends and your family and your community and that really was very important for us. And we haven't had too many occasions where we have needed to rely on these people. We have had a couple of instances within our immediate family that we needed to be the helpers and I would of course do the same for the people who were so generous to us. But we have been very fortunate, we have not had serious bad times.

**KH:** How do you define success in your life and has the definition of success changed over time for you?

**MM:** I think it has changed because I think right now, I would define success as having a career that I'm passionate about while also enjoying my family, my friends, and life in general. And the only thing that has changed I think I've probably always felt the same way. I'm very work driven. I've been working since I was about thirteen. So [laughs] work has always been a really important part of my identity so I think that's why it's a part of how I perceive success. But what has changed is the material aspect of it because I know when I was young and in my twenties, and I was working hard to get promotions where I would earn more money, and I switched companies to get raises and that felt very empowering to me, to earn more money and buy a big house. That was part of my definition of success and that is out the window now. I mean I don't really want to be poverty stricken ever. I think that it's much more important to have things that you do that you love and are passionate about and that if you can do that and reconcile yourself to whatever manner of living you can exist in with that, that's far more successful than monetary success.

**KH:** Based on your life experience, what advice would you give to women of today and future generations?

**MM:** Well first of all, I would reiterate what I was saying a few minutes ago, that you should not feel that you cannot have it all. I think that is a crazy phrase that—can you work eighty hours a week and still be home to cook dinner? No, you can't but you can have it all in the sense that you can have a fulfilling career and you can have a family, you can have a meaningful

relationship with your spouse or significant other and you can enjoy your life, and you should. And you should try to pick a career that you love and then not feel one hundred percent wedded to it. Let life take you where it is going to take you and just keep engaging in all of the things that are meaningful to you in addition to your career so that you don't become tunnel visioned into it. Don't become tunnel visioned into your relationships either. Make sure that you always have a broad range of career interests and friends and hobbies that really make you feel good and so then as you are thrown challenges and constraints, you have different outlets to use for them.

**KM:** Now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of woman that has been recorded in the past, what should we be sure to include?

**MM:** Let's see. I think that one of the things that historians still sort of grapple with in women's history is to look at women from one dimension only. This is one thing I found with the woman I'm studying for my dissertation, is that when we are studying women, we think of them as, "Oh well she was the CEO of blah or she was a religious activist or she was a working class whatever." And there was actually a study done at Harvard a few years ago about women and how women define influence and power and it really made a lot of sense to me. That we are so multidimensional and so I think women felt more sort of powerful and more influential when they could utilize all of their strengths and be multidimensional people. And I think that historians should look at women from all of these standpoints at once. Their work, their non-work, their home lives, their families, their relationships to be more inclusive.

**KM:** And then for our final question, is there anyone else you would suggest that we should talk to?

**MM:** Oh, great question. Well, do you know if they have interviewed other faculty at Clark? Because there are some great women there and there's the office administrator. I would have to ask her permission first.

**KM:** [laughs]

**MM:** The office administrator at Clark who is early seventies. I think she has lived in Worcester forever and she is a wonderful person. She works in the history department and just knows a tremendous amount about Worcester, and she raised her kids here and she's been part of academia, she's a part of lots of different aspects of the community. I could check and see if she would be open to that.

**KM:** Okay yeah that would be great. I think that is it.