

Interviewee: Faye "Fannie" Smalley  
Interviewers: Sarah Kenton and Stephen Wilk II  
Date of Interview: October 2, 2016  
Location: Jewish Healthcare Center, 629 Salisbury Street,  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609  
Transcribers: Sarah Kenton & Stephen Wilk II



Overseen by: Dr. Carl Robert Keyes & Dr. Arlene Vadum, Assumption College

**Abstract:** Faye “Fannie” Kravitz Smalley was born on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1917 and has lived in Worcester her entire life. She lived through a time where men were the ones with the jobs and women were the ones who took care of the household, but she was different than most women her age and seemed to do both of these things. She worked for her family business at a neighborhood marketplace and she took care of both her parents as well as her husband as they faced serious illnesses. She has gone through multiple personal struggles but handled them very well and with courage. During her interview, Faye discusses the transition of Worcester over time because she has lived through lots of changes and has noticed many differences in Worcester as well as the American society in general. She gives her input to many modern topics and gives advice to the younger generations that are growing up in today’s society. When asked if she had any advice to women of future generations, she stated, “Women are doing very good and they’re standing up for themselves, and that would be my advice, to stand up for yourself.” [Post-interview note; Faye Smalley passed away on October 20, 2016 at the age of 99, just a few days after this interview].

**SW:** We are going to begin recording. So, we are currently recording.

**FS:** Mhmhm [accompanied by a nod of approval]

**SW:** So the interview has begun.

**SK:** Okay, what is your full name including both maiden name and married name if applicable?

**FS:** Fannie [Faye] Kravitz Smalley. I use Kravitz for my middle name but that's my maiden name.

**SK:** Do you have any children?

**FS:** No.

**SW:** Okay, what cultures or ethnicities do you identify with?

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**FS:** Jewish.

**SW:** Jewish, okay.

**FS:** As a matter of fact, tonight's the New Year.

**SW:** That's what David [relative, David Meyers] said. Could you please tell me about your parents?

**FS:** What do you want to know?

**SW:** Did you live with them for a long time growing up?

**FS:** Oh, I lived with them for my whole (\_\_\_?) until they passed away. We lived together because I didn't have any children, we had a little business, a little neighborhood market, so we figured if I lived at home with them I had less, you know, work to do. So, we went to the store during the day, and at home I helped my mother as much as I could. But we lived together in a six-room apartment.

**SW:** Excellent.

**FS:** And my father was a tailor, by trad –a good one. And my mother stayed at home once they got married. That was the thing years ago: when you got married, you stayed home. And my mother lived until she was 74.

[Footsteps, nurse comes in to deliver items: "Excuse me, I've got bags for you."]

**FS:** Okay, thank you. [Nurse: You're welcome] I'm sorry.

**SW:** That's okay.

[Faye and Nurse situate items on table]

**FS:** You might get interrupted a (\_\_\_???)

**SW:** It's okay. It will add to the context

**FS:** My mother was 74 when she passed away. We had just two of us – my brother and myself. And my father [brief pause], got Alzheimer's when he was [brief pause], he must have been in his late 80's when he started to show signs of Alzheimer's. And I kept him home until he passed away. He was 91 when he died.

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**SW:** Wow

**SK:** Wow

**FS:** And that was their life. They didn't accomplish a whole lot, but they raised two children, and I guess they were content with what, you know, they put up with whatever they had. So that was, that was my whole, my whole lifetime.

**SK:** Did you say you had a family market? Is that what you said?

**FS:** What'd you say?

**SK:** That you, you ran like a family business, is that what you said before?

**FS:** Yeah we had an old neighborhood market.

**SK:** That's an accomplishment.

**FS:** A grocery store.

**SK:** That's good.

**FS:** It didn't accomplish too much, it was, just, well I met my husband after he got back from the service, and we went into the store – this is what he wanted. And [brief pause], we were there for 26 years. And when he retired, he—well my father and he both retired about the same time, so I had the two men at home. But, we didn't accomplish a whole lot. We worked hard. We worked six and a half days a week. And, when we retired, we just, went from day to day, you know, we didn't do any traveling or anything. We weren't, we were just stay at home people. [brief pause] You're not getting a very, a very exciting thing here.

**SW:** That's okay. I'm sure we'll get – we'll delve into that. Okay. Where have you lived during your life?

**FS:** Here in Worcester [Massachusetts] in rented apartments. We didn't own any property. We lived in rented apartments.

**SW:** What neighborhood in Worcester did you grow up in?

**FS:** We started off in Union Hill, near the Worcester Academy, and then we ended up in Tatnuck, and when the house was sold and we had to move, we moved in [brief pause] Lincoln Village. And we lived there for 26 years. We didn't move around too much.

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**SW:** That's alright.

**SK:** Do you have any other family members that live around here?

**FS:** Just my two cousins, David and Diane.

**SW:** What was the neighborhood generally like – that you grew up in?

**FS:** Well, they - [interrupted by nurse bringing items and candy. To nurse, "Thank you!"] Would you like some sucking candy?

**SW:** That's alright.

**SK:** I'm okay, thank you.

**FS:** That's coffee flavored. [pointing to candy]

**SK:** These ones?

**FS:** The (\_\_\_???)

**SK:** Thank you.

**FS:** They're sugar free. I'll warn ya, some people they'll go for the sugar free.

**SW:** It's true.

**FS:** [apparent thought]

**SW:** Yes, the neighborhood.

**FS:** We lived near the Worcester Academy, at first, behind the Worcester Academy, and we went to Union Hill School. At that time Union Hill School was a very nice school. Now it gets a lot of bad publicity, but it was a nice school when we went. And then from there, we moved to Woodford Street – that's also in that area – and then we moved to Tatnuck, [brief pause] Brantwood Road, that was a nice area. And then up to [brief pause] Lincoln Village, that's the, we lived in the high rise there – do you know Lincoln Village?

**SK:** [murmur suggesting no]

**FS:** Do you know where Lincoln Plaza and the new build up—you're not from around here?

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**SW:** We aren't – I'm from Vermont but -

**FS:** Lincoln Village is a tremendous place – it's four high risers, a bunch of townhouses.

**SK:** Oh nice.

**FS:** But they're rentals, they're all rentals, and the buildings that we lived in had 15 floors.

**SK:** Oh my god.

**FS:** And we lived on the sixth floor. Thank goodness it wasn't any higher. [laughs] My husband liked it there, I was more accustomed to a (\_\_\_???) type living, but he liked it there. [brief pause] So that was the area that we wound up in.

**SW:** Very nice.

**SK:** What did you like to do in your free time when you were younger?

**FS:** [brief pause] I can't remember having a whole lot of free time, but after we retired I, I didn't really – I wasn't a joiner, but I tried to contribute to different charities, you know? I didn't do a whole lot, I didn't accomplish a whole lot.

**SK:** Do you think the city of Worcester faces any challenges?

**FS:** [brief pause] Everybody faces challenges today.

**SK:** You think so?

**FS:** I was, I was watching TV before on channel five, and they were talking about Russia interfering with the election, and it's pretty scary if they can come in on the internet and interfere with our voting, then the whole country faces a challenge.

**SW:** Very well put.

**SK:** Have you seen any big changes in Worcester over time?

**FS:** Oh yeah.

**SK:** Yes.

**FS:** Yes. Well the area, when people came from overseas they kind of settled in one group. And

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the Jewish people settled on Water Street – do you know where Water Street is?

**SW:** We should have been more local!

**FS:** It used to be a [brief pause], you could get anything you wanted down there. They had a dry goods store, they had three bakeries, they had a drug store, and a creamery, and fish markets, and fruit markets, and on Saturday night it used to light up, everybody came, and they walked along – there were two delicatessens, and people stopped and ate, and it was lively. Now it's—they're trying to pick it up, it's got ethnic restaurants and things, but the area is such that you wouldn't walk through it at night.

**SW:** Yeah. Did -

**FS:** So, the city changed.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** It seems as though the people shifted.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** Yep. From what was once a nice area became a more or less of a slum.

**SW:** Did you say that you would/could walk at night years ago? And then to -

**FS:** Years ago, you could go anywhere.

**SW:** Yeah.

**FS:** Walk in the street and it didn't bother you, no one bothered you. And now, you, you

**SW:** Much different.

**FS:** I know some people that when they, when they drive through south Worcester, they lock their doors, because they're afraid to ride through. It's a whole different set up now.

[talk among interviewers]

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

**FS:** Women?

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**SW:** Women, what have women's experiences been like?

**FS:** I don't, I just don't know how to answer that because I've never been in, in social work. [brief pause] But -

**SW:** You could discuss, say, their work opportunities or their, say, opportunity to get education - have you seen a development of that?

**FS:** Well, I'll tell you before the war, women took whatever jobs they could get, whether it was factory or whatever.

**SW:** You mean World War II?

**FS:** World War II, yes.

**SW:** Okay.

**FS:** But a lot of the girls joined the Worcester Women's Army Corps. When they came back, they had a little more push, and they were able to get better paying jobs, because the pay years ago wasn't what it is today. Today they're fighting for a \$15 minimum wage [laughs]. I worked for a year in a bake shop, and I earned \$12 a week.

**SK:** Wow.

**FS:** For a 60-hour week.

**SK:** Oh my gosh.

**FS:** So it came to about 25 cents an hour. And then I advanced, I went into a—I did bookkeeping and cashiering in a men's and boy's wear. And I advanced to \$16 [laughs]. And by the time I finished, when I got married I had to go in with my husband, it was 1951. My highest salary was \$30 a week. Today you work two hours for \$30.

**SW:** Absolutely.

**SK:** That's crazy.

**FS:** So there was a change – a terrific change.

**SW:** Certainly. Okay, I'm going to shift towards education, educational questions.

**FS:** Oh that's a whole different ball game. Nowadays you get nowhere unless you have a college

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degree.

**SW:** Absolutely.

**FS:** When I was growing up, the women seldom went to college. There wasn't the money to send them. So naturally, if there was a boy and girl in the family, the boy went to college.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** The girls – graduated high school we got a job, but things are different today. Today, every girl has an idea that she wants to go for - 'cause I don't know if I had the brain to go, [laughter] but I, I didn't even think about college.

**SW:** Did you attend high school in Worcester, as well?

**FS:** Yeah. I – Commerce High School I went to. There were Commerce, and Classical, and North and South, and there were Girl's Trade or, you could choose, as a rule, if you hadn't planned on going to college, you went to a commercial school because they learned how to type and (\_\_\_???), and you knew you would do something along those lines. But, I went to Commerce, and I graduated in 1935.

**SW:** Would you say you had any challenges in education?

**FS:** Challenges? Didn't think about it at the time.

**SW:** That's okay.

**SK:** What was the name of the school that you said you went to?

**FS:** Commerce High School

**SK:** How do you spell that?

**FS:** C-O-M-M-E-R-C-E.

**SK:** Oh commerce, okay. Okay.

**FS:** Yeah.

**SK:** Thank you.

**SW:** So, upon graduating from high school, what did you see as your options from that point? I

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know you discussed getting to work -

**FS:** It was, it was very glum, because this was the height of the Depression.

**SW:** Ah yes, it was.

**FS:** You took whatever you could get. When, when they had a job advertised in the paper, lines stood for the one job. So my, my first, well temporary job was to be (\_\_\_???). I answered an ad, and I got a job at the department store as a sales clerk in the men's wear.

**SW:** Excellent.

**SK:** Was that your first job?

**FS:** It was temporary, for the holiday.

**SK:** Oh, yeah.

**FS:** And then, after the holiday was over, I was called into the office and they said they, they had watched me, you know, when I was working with – how I work with people – would I like to work there permanently. Well they put me in millinery, and that, years ago, every women, you know, wore a hat, you got (\_\_\_???), you put a hat on. But I hated to, [brief pause] to flatter a person, you know you put a hat on you feel you're making a sale, you tell her how gorgeous she looks, I couldn't do that. So I remember one incident, where I asked the woman, you know, what she would like to spend, and she said she didn't want to go into the higher prices, so I showed her her price range. And I had her sold on a hat. Well the head sales girl was watching me and she figured I didn't put enough pressure on her. So she came over to take over, and she took out the more expensive hats, and the women wasn't interested. So, she just got up and walked out. So I lost the sale, and she thought she was a big shot, but I didn't stay in that job very long.

**SW:** I can see why.

**FS:** So then I went in to a bake shop for a year. And when this opportunity came up, to be an office clerk, that was more in my line, so I gave up the bake shop and I went and worked there and I worked there for 11 years before I got married. And that was my work, my whole work life.

**SK:** What do you think the pros and cons are of everything that you've chosen to do?

**FS:** I don't understand what you said.

**SK:** I don't know, do, you –

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**SW:** That is a tough one.

**SK:** Are you happy with the choices that you made, like in your work life?

**SW:** Within work decisions.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** I had no, I had no choices, it seemed to, it seemed to come to me and I had to accept whatever, you know?

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** Yeah, okay. So we're going to shift towards more community type questions, and somewhat political questions. Do you consider yourself active politically?

**FS:** Active?

**SW:** Yeah, so do you vote?

**FS:** I vote, yes.

**SW:** Okay.

**FS:** And I listen to all the stuff that's going on. Not too happy with things, the way they are right now, but neither are a lot of people.

**SW:** Certainly reasonable to feel -

**FS:** Are you of voting age?

**SW:** We are.

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** This will be the first general election that we can vote in.

**FS:** I pity you because you don't have much of a choice.

**SK:** I know.

**SW:** Very true.

**SK:** You said you did community service, right?

**FS:** Charitable work.

**SK:** Yeah, so what kind of things did you do?

**FS:** Just contributions to the different charities. I didn't really take an active part. My mother was the one that was -

**SK:** Oh yeah.

**FS:** She belonged to all kinds of societies and went to meetings and she loved doing that sort of thing.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** But, I didn't have time in my earlier life, and afterwards I just didn't care. But, I contributed to whatever.

**SK:** Well that's nice.

**SW:** Do you have, was there a certain presidency or election, or anything like that, that stood out over the course of your life?

**FS:** Oh yes.

**SW:** I'm sure.

**FS:** Franklin Roosevelt.

**SW:** Absolutely.

**FS:** That was before your time.

**SW:** We've studied him, though.

**FS:** Yeah, he, he really did a job on the country because we were dire need of someone, that was strong and could pull us out, and he did it.

**SW:** He certainly did.

**FS:** In my, in my opinion he was one of the great ones. [brief pause] The others afterwards, well Kennedy did a good job, but some of them I, they seem to let things just go.

**SW:** Certainly.

**FS:** And boy they need a good one this time -

**FS:** And they don't have it.

**SW:** Oh, I know it.

**FS:** I don't know what's going to happen to tell you the truth. I'm hoping that at the last minute someone comes in but there isn't anyone. Look at all those people that ran on the Republican President, there wasn't one, they all dropped out, and I think his [Donald Trump] money is buying him the election.

**SW:** It's been an incredibly interesting past year and a half of the race.

**FS:** I don't know what's going to ... At first, I thought the only reason that [brief pause] what's the name would get in, the woman?

**SK:** Hillary [Clinton]?

**FS:** Is because she's a woman. But he is showing himself to be such a nothing, but I don't know if she's strong enough. They claim that if she gets in her husband will run country. That's ridiculous. They wouldn't allow that. And if she does get in, and she has a Democratic House and Senate, she may do something, but if they're going to fight her like they fought [President Barack] Obama, then she won't have a chance. Obama could have done good things if they didn't – everything he said, before he opened his mouth, they said no. They didn't let him, so I don't know what's going to happen this time, but this is a bad one.

**SW:** Does, would you say that this is the worst or – election cycle you've seen?

**FS:** The worst one I've seen. I've never seen anything so bungled up. And I don't know where people's minds are. He makes such crazy remarks, that, and then he, he says one thing, and then he says another. And none of them make sense, and yet there are crowds cheering for him. So you wonder what kind of a, what kind of a leader were going to have.

**SW:** Those are good questions to raise. We'll ask one more political. Do you think that if Secretary Clinton is nominated to President, do you think that will be good for women in general?

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**FS:** Well she would be good for women, that's for sure and she cares for children. And she does have overseas experience, so it seems to me, at least, she's a plausible. But he, he doesn't have overseas experience at all and, if you'll pardon me, he's setting himself up to be a jackass.  
[laughs]

**SW:** Absolutely, please don't [laughs]. Okay, [to SK] do you want to shift to health?

**SK:** So we're going to ask, just a few questions about your health. How have health issues impacted your life or those in your family?

**FS:** I didn't hear what you said.

**SK:** How have health issues impacted your life or members of your family?

**FS:** My family?

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** Well, my mother had angina, she died when she was 74. Which I thought was a little too soon, because she seemed robust and healthy, but just her breathing, and I think if she lived a few years longer, there were things that would develop afterwards that could have given her ease. My father worked when, he was in his eighties.

[Roommate in room yelling: "I need help!"]

**FS:** But, oh she's looking for someone.

**SW:** [To SK: "You can keep it [the recording device] going, it will add context.", *SK leaves to find nurse*]

[interview interrupted to find someone to assist roommate]

**SK:** She's just calling for someone so I think I'm going to ask . . .

**FS:** Oh yeah, get someone in the hallway, she wants to go to the bathroom.

**SW:** Yeah.

[extended pause, Nurse: "Oh you need to use the bathroom?"]

**SK:** Okay.

**FS:** So my father started to show signs of, Alzheimer's when he was about 80, and I kept him home with me, and he didn't know me. It was a little heartbreaking, you know?

**SK:** Yeah, yeah.

**FS:** But he was alright until he had a stroke, and he died when he was 91 years old. My husband, I think he was mis—his primary physician just didn't handle things right because he saw him since he was 65 years old and he didn't recognize that he had Parkinson's so I asked him when he was already, you know, quite ill, "Shouldn't we see a neurologist?" So he made an appointment for a neurologist, and he immediately said he had Parkinson's, and, highly developed. So he left, till, how old was he [asking herself] short of eighty-five when he died. So I was with each one, you know, as they went along.

**SK:** That's tough.

**FS:** And I'm dragging! And there's nothing especially wrong with me except that I, can't, since I broke my hip, I can't walk on my own. And I was at home until a couple of years ago. It's only short of two years that I'm here. I broke my hip in October twelfth of 19—2014, and I never went home after that. They broke up the apartment. So this is where I wind up [small laugh] and I have to put up with it, that's all. I'm fortunate, you know, that I have a place where, that'll take care of me,

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** Absolutely.

**FS:** Because I don't have anyone my own. My two nephews live in, one lives in, [short pause] he just moved up to New Hampshire. He lived in Malden. And the other one is in Stoneham. The one that's in Stoneham is my power of—has my power of attorney. And the two relatives that I have here, David, that was here, and his sister.

**SK:** Is David your-

**FS:** A cousin.

**SK:** Oh, your cousin.

**FS:** Yes, my cousin and the other two are my brother's boys. I had just one sibling. They're my brother's boys. They're good to me, but they can't sit here and watch me all the time.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** So I'm grateful I have a place to be.

**SW:** It seems like David likes to give you a hard time.

**FS:** He's got a great sense of humor.

**SW:** Okay, I think we're gonna shift towards, what will be the final few questions, but feel free to elaborate and go on as long as you want about any of them, so [to SK], wanna just ask the first one?

**SK:** Yeah, are there any things that you do to help you get through tough times?

**FS:** Now?

**SK:** Yeah,

**SW:** Or throughout your life.

**FS:** I, I don't know how to answer that.

**SK:** Like, did your family members keep you going?

**FS:** My what?

**SK:** Your family members?

**FS:** Keep me going?

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** When you're feeling, or face difficult times in your life, whether it be, lost a job, or change in anything. Anything that's been hard to overcome, it is a broad question.

**FS:** Well, earlier years I lived with my folks so I didn't have to depend on anyone, but when my father was ill, my brother used to come in every week. He lived in Boston, and he took us shopping and he took care of my father for the day, I just let him handle it, and I didn't expect any more from him I didn't, you know, push him.. The only thing is if an emergency rose I would call him and he would come. But, I had no, I didn't depend on anyone. I was more or less my own person.

**SK:** That's good.

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**SW:** Excellent.

**SK:** What advice would you give to women today and in future generations?

**FS:** I don't think I have enough experience to give them advice. But they're doing good. Women are doing very good and they're standing up for themselves, and that would be my advice, to stand up for yourself.

**SW:** Excellent.

**SK:** That's good.

**SW:** How would you define success in your life, and has this definition changed over time?

**FS:** Well, things have changed (\_\_\_???) What would have been successful years ago is nothing today. A person in order to be successful to me is say they're in a place where they are comfortable, and, well I don't know if money is that important, but you can't do a whole lot without it,

**SW:** That's true

**FS:** So you have to earn a decent living. And, each one I think has a different view of success. What degree of (\_\_\_???) if you're a lawyer or a doctor, that's successful. But it depends on what you want and what your goal is. That's the only way I can answer that.

**SW:** That's fine

**SK:** [to SW] Are there any more besides this one [talking about a question]?

**SW:** Now this is kind of a side question, and it is one of the final ones, but it is just something that I really wanted to ask; what was your favorite musical group or song throughout your life? Do you have like a favorite song right now, or?

**FS:** [laughs] The present songs I don't even understand.

**SK:** [laughs]

**SW:** That's funny.

**FS:** So I go back to the time when the songs had meaning, when you could understand the words and they had meaning. So it was so funny, this song kept hitting me in the head all the time,

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‘What did I do when you’re away?’ You know, it’s a blues song.

**SW:** It’s a blues song.

**FS:** So I had my nephew look it up on the, uh,

**SW:** iPhone?

**FS:** On the iPhone, and they, he hit the song and Frank Sinatra was singing it.

**SW:** Wow.

**FS:** But he sang it so slowly that you wanted to draw him out [laughs, and it must have been the first time when he was young, you know, before, when he first started. So a couple of weeks ago I was watching the Golden Girls [TV show], and, the big one, the tall one, was in the night club, and the piano player was playing, and she went over to him, and uh, he says, “Would you like to sing something,” so she says, “Do you know the song?” [referring to the song FS mentioned before] and he says, “Of course.” And he played it and she sang it and it was beautiful! [laughs] So the same song rang through my head all these years.

**SW:** Really.

**FS:** But, I liked a good (\_\_\_???) singer, someone sang they’re playing ball in England... football I think. In England.

**SW:** They are.

**FS:** And uh, this colored opera singer sang the Star Spangled Banner, and he sang it so beautifully that it went to your heart... he had a gorgeous voice.

Nurse: Hi, can I just clean up a little bit for you?

**FS:** Pardon?

Nurse: Is it okay if I just take out the garbage and the bathroom and stuff?

**FS:** Yeah, sure. [talking to nurse] They gave me a bag, don’t worry about the bag, no that’s clothes over there.

[Nurse: “Yep.”]

**SW:** So that song stuck with you then.

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**FS:** Oh yeah, and I'd like all the songs of my past, but this stuff that they're singing now I can't take it [laughing].

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** That's definitely changed as well, quite a bit.

**FS:** They don't have any meaning.

**SK:** I know.

**SW:** Most, most don't. Okay, [SW and SK decide the next question to ask] What major historical events in Worcester have occurred during your time here, and did they have an impact on you personally?

**FS:** I can't think of anything historical.

**SW:** Is there anything, I mean you discussed going through the Great Depression, is there anything, that you want to elaborate on, or something other than that, that has been, significant in Worcester?

**FS:** How can—I can't tell (\_\_\_???) I do remember years ago before, before Roosevelt was elected he came to Worcester, and it was a rainy day, and I was sitting in the dentist office, and we could see his cars drive right by the main street and it was pouring rain, and the dentist says, [laughs] "Boy, they're giving him a wet reception." That I remember, but I don't remember any gross changes in the area, except for all the colleges, this is a college town.

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** It is.

**FS:** A lot of colleges here that are new like the University of Massachusetts, uh...

**SW:** Medical Center?

**FS:** Medical Center, that's new, and the pharmacy [college] opened up downtown, my brother graduated in Boston from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy.

**SK:** Oh yeah.

**SW:** Now they have a Worcester campus.

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**FS:** Local (\_\_\_???) There's, a lot of the outskirts, when I—I don't ride around that much, but when I do get a ride around—that are new. The whole thing- I think that the town of Worcester in itself is not big enough to handle what we have in the outskirts now. The colleges and things. There isn't enough to attract people downtown. Downtown is really broken up.

**SW:** I agree with that, it's almost like Worcester is just a giant suburbia because there isn't a downtown like in Boston, I can speak for myself, I've never been downtown Worcester just to go walk about.

**FS:** You wouldn't see anything. Years ago, you could go down and go window shopping and spend the day. All the stores were open, everything was beautiful. There isn't a store downtown. Everything is boarded up. And yet it's supposed to be a major medic—college town.

**SW:** Yeah but there's no-

**FS:** But there's nobody; it doesn't draw you.

**SW:** I agree.

**FS:** They opened up, a new hotel near the-

**SW:** DCU Center?

**FS:** The DCU Center

**SW:** Ah yeah, I think its Courtyard, or a (\_\_\_???) or a Courtyard. I think I know what you're talking about, there's a parking garage across the street.

**FS:** There used to be another hotel, and that now its—one of the colleges I think is renting it for uh, dorms.

**SW:** Oh.

**SK:** Oh really?

**SW:** WPI, yes.

**FS:** Yeah.

**SW:** Now I know what you're talking about.

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**FS:** But the other hotel I haven't seen anything that's, to tell me if its operating or not, it's a beautiful place, I rode by a few times.

**SW:** Absolutely

**FS:** But, ah, the center of town is not attractive for people to come here. When you have college people in the town, you expect their family to come and, walk around and spend money, there aren't any classy restaurants. The Hanover Theater opened up and it's in the section where it was deteriorating to start with, so I don't see that they're—the outskirts have increased, but I don't see that the center of town has had any changes. It's really a shame.

**SW:** [to SK] Do you have any closing questions-

**SK:** I don't have any more.

**SW:** Do you have any advice for us?

**FS:** [Laughs] That's, yeah. (to SK) You're what, you're a—where are you in school?

**SK:** I'm a freshman.

**FS:** Oh, you're just started!

**SK:** Mm-hm.

**FS:** At Assumption?

**SK:** Yep.

**FS:** And what are you majoring in?

**SK:** I don't know yet.

**FS:** Oh, you haven't made up your mind? And you're a so—you're a junior?

**SW:** I'm a junior, yes.

**FS:** And you, you're gonna go to graduate school?

**SW:** I am. Hopefully medical school.

**FS:** Oh, you're going to medical school?

**SW:** That is the goal, absolutely, it's looking good for now, so...

**FS:** That's a good field today.

**SW:** I hope so.

**FS:** [laughs] Yeah, everybody's got something.

[SK and SW discussing next question]

**FS:** It's a funny thing the young people today start college and don't know which direction they're going. Now, David's nephew is in Spain right now.

**SK:** Oh really?

**FS:** He's ah, I think it's a learning tour, he's there for a year. And the niece graduated nursing school, but she didn't go to a hospital for nursing, she went to a four-year college. She's still isn't working. She's been out for three years.

**SK:** Wow.

**FS:** She took the exam for a registered nurse, and didn't pass, so she's studying again. Now I don't know what you can study at home. She should be either taking courses, or working as an aide or something, but that's below her.

**SK:** Yeah... yeah.

**FS:** After she, after she took four years of school, you know. So it's hard, it's really hard for people to make up their mind today, what they want to do.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** And it's not easy because it costs, everything that you're gonna do further costs more... [to SK] but you don't know in what field you want to be?

**SK:** I don't know yet, no.

**FS:** So what course are you taking?

**SK:** Well at first I was thinking of doing human services, so I'm in an intro class for that, but, I

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don't think I want to do that anymore, and then I'm taking philosophy, this woman's studies class, chemistry, and psychology.

**FS:** Do you have to... is psychology a requirement?

**SK:** No.

**FS:** Oh, it isn't?

**SK:** No.

**FS:** So will you get credits for this?

**SK:** For this class?

**FS:** Yeah.

**SK:** Yes.

**FS:** [to SW] And what made you turn to medicine?

**SW:** Well, uh, initially I've just been in hospitals a lot for injuries, but, I've always liked the idea of...

**FS:** Well you have the [?] for it [laughs].

**SW:** Thank you, uh I just think it's a good way I can give back. It's also, I don't know, I think it's an occupation where its, it's not, it has the opportunity to not be an occupation, because it's a very basic route, you're just helping someone. [pauses] Alright were gonna ask the very, very last question. It's not, it's not too bad, is there anyone else that you suggest that we talk to?

**FS:** Is there-

**SW:** Is there anyone else that we should talk to?

**SK:** Like is there, is there someone else we could interview or anybody that you know here?

**SW:** Or, just, or anyone that you think we should talk to, just for any reason, just to gather-

**FS:** To gather information?

**SW:** About someone who would provide as value as insight that you've given us.

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**FS:** I don't understand that, you mean here?

**SW:** Oh, of like a close, like perhaps someone like David that would also, it is kind of a difficult question I suppose but, just uh, anyone else that also has a lot of experience and also knows a lot about Worcester as well, or.

**FS:** Well David grew up in Worcester.

**SW:** He did?

**FS:** Yeah

**SW:** Okay. [to SK] So perhaps we talk to David a little bit..)

**FS:** Yeah I think he wants to talk to you anyway.

**SW:** Excellent.

**FS:** He wants to see what you accomplish.

**SW:** What we could produce, and now you can say, you should be able to say we really did accomplish something. Because I think you've accomplished a lot in your life

**FS:** You really didn't pick a, how do I put it, a worldly person to talk to [laughing].

**SW:** Oh I would disagree with that.

**FS:** I, I never really accomplished a whole lot in my life, but I just went from one day to the next, and accepted whatever, maybe I was a little bit too complacent, but I accepted things the way they were, you know?

**SK:** I think it's great how independent you say you were.

**SW:** Absolutely, especially.

**SK:** And it sounds like you took care of all your family members so-

**FS:** Well what I'm grateful about is that I have my mind,

**SW:** Very sharp.

**FS:** Because at this stage of my life, you feel as though you want to have a say in what's going on, and I can push if I have to, you know?

**SW:** Absolutely

**FS:** I see what's here... there's a woman here that we grew up together, her birthday is in April, and mine is in January. She's also gonna be a hundred the next birthday.

**SW:** Wow.

**SK:** Wow.

**FS:** But, she lost her sight.

**SK:** Oh no.

**FS:** And her mind is going.

**SK:** Yeah, that's sad.

**FS:** And I think it has a lot to do with the fact that she can't see, and she knows me, but we can't have a conversation. Like she came in here the other day and we visited, and she said to me, well I take the van, the wheel chair van when I go to the doctor, she says to me, "When you get the van, when you take the van, would you take me with you," she says, 'I wanna go down to the school department and look for a job'. Now she worked for the school department, she was the secretary. And she was very good at it. She worked there until she was in her seventies. We used to talk to each other on the phone every day. Sometimes we talked for an hour. About anything and nothing, she was great for politics. She knew the names of the senators and everything. And when I see her now, it's like she's withering away. And it's heartbreaking. To think that we're both—and she was smarter than me. She always got A's in school. We went to the same schools. And she always got A's, all A's all the time. And she played in the school band, she was really active, and now to see her this way it breaks my heart.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** So I'm grateful for that. That I at least have my mind, and of course my sight. Something else again—don't need my glasses except for reading, but I don't hear too well.

**SK:** Yeah.

**FS:** So what I don't hear I don't hit.

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**SW:** Not necessarily a bad thing.

**FS:** But I take this, I go there, they have a group here, they call it “hot topics.” There’s a little brochure there that they build up, under my books-

**SK:** [picks up brochure] This one?

**FS:** Yeah, and every Tuesday we get together and we discuss, they read, they have the monitor that reads the, keys (\_\_\_???) and then we put, we have, we put our input into it.

**SK:** Oh that’s fun.

**SW:** So it keeps you up to date.

**SK:** Yeah.

**SW:** That’s very good.

**SK:** Something to do.

**FS:** So, there’s usually about ten or twelve people that come.

**SW:** That’s excellent they have something that, will keep you on the hot topics in today’s world.

**FS:** Some of them, you know, are really put into it, and some of them just sit there.

**SW:** Well, uh I think that’s going to wrap up the interview, and thank you very much.

**SK:** Yeah, thank you.

**FS:** I appreciate it very much, the fact that you want to bother with it [laughing]

**SW:** Absolutely, thank you again.

**FS:** And I hope that you accomplish something with this. If it’s giving you credits towards your schooling, I appreciate that. So I made a contribution.

**SK:** Yeah!

**SW:** Of course you did, this will be, this will be put into history, it is an important thing that we did here today.

**FS:** Now you have to unplug something?

**SW:** I do, and I gotta plug your light back in,

**FS:** [laughs] That's my bed, don't leave my bed unplugged.

**SW:** I won't, can't be doing that.