

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of United Schools Project

Teaching Experiences

O. H. 562

MARILYN MELLINGER

Interviewed

by

John Gecina

on

February 17, 1981

MARILYN ANN MELLINGER

Marilyn Mellinger was born on March 6, 1929, the daughter of Chester and Ruth Mellinger. She graduated from Salem High School and proceeded to further her education by attending Bowling Green State University, graduating from that institution with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1951.

Miss Mellinger started teaching in 1951. Since 1958 she has been a physical education teacher for the United School System.

Marilyn is a member of the First Christian Church, the United Education Association, Ohio Education Association, OAHPERD [Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance], AAHPERD [American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance], the U.S. Olympic Society, and the Salem Bowling Association. Her interests include bowling, reading, walking, word games and puzzles, traveling, and collecting mugs.

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INTERVIEWEE: MARILYN MELLINGER

INTERVIEWER: John Gecina

SUBJECT: Teaching experiences, discipline, principals,  
salary

DATE: February 17, 1981

G: This is an interview with Marilyn Mellinger for the Youngstown State University Oral History Project on United Schools, by John Gecina, on February 17, 1981, at 1:30 p.m.

Miss Mellinger, would you please give me a short background on yourself, where you were born, where you went to high school, a little bit about your parents and maybe other family members?

M: I was born in Salem, Ohio. I went to Salem High School. I lived in Salem all of my life. I have one sister, three years younger than I am, who is married. I have a brother who is almost nineteen years younger than I am, who is married and in the Air Force. My mother died in 1958 and my father is still living. I went to Bowling Green State University. I have been teaching for thirty years.

G: Do your sister and brother both live around here?

M: My sister lives in California and my brother is stationed in the Air Force in Michigan.

G: Do you get a chance to visit them very much?

M: I haven't seen my sister in about five years. My brother, I saw him when he came home from England two years ago and I plan to visit him this summer.

G: Do you remember what high school was like?

M: Yes. It wasn't as crowded although we didn't have as large a high school as they have now. We had rules and regulations which everybody followed. Seniors sort of kept freshmen in line. It was a fun time. I enjoyed it. I had to work hard.

I was a very good student. You knew what was expected of you and you did it. The parents backed the teachers, and when you came home complaining the parents mostly said, "What did the teacher say?" You told them what the teacher had said and they replied, "Then that's what you do."

G: It was almost like if you got smacked in school you were going to come home and get smacked again by your parents, right?

M: Right. If you got in trouble in school you threatened your brothers and sisters not to squeal, because if I was in trouble in school I got in trouble at home.

G: Now you mentioned that the seniors kind of kept the underclassmen in line. Did they do it physically?

M: No. We had certain stairways that went up and certain stairways that went down. It didn't make any difference how far you had to go, you still only used certain stairways up and certain stairways down. Heaven help you if you were a freshman and got caught going up the wrong stairway.

G: So they had a little bit of an initiation for you then?

M: They just let you know what . . . no physical pressure. It was just, "Hey freshman!" or "Hey frosh!"

G: How big was your high school?

M: There were 129 in our graduating class. I suppose there were 600 or 700 in the high school; that was nine through twelve.

G: What were some of your teachers like? Can you remember anyone in particular that maybe had a big influence on you?

M: Well, there were several teachers. Teachers were friends, but there was always a line between what a teacher was and what a student was. I had several teachers that helped me. I had an English teacher who was also my band director.

G: Do you remember his name?

M: Mr. Brautigam, he was the superintendent of the schools here at one time. A super, great biology teacher, Mrs. Cox, also wrote the textbooks that we used and has written textbooks, revisions on them. There was a geometry teacher, Mrs. Singer, who went out of her way to help on weekends and nights.

G: Do you think that teachers then maybe took a little bit more interest in the kids than today?

M: I don't think they took more interest. I think teachers have the same interest. I don't think they have time to have the interest. We're so bogged down with large classes and paper

- work. I think, too, that students don't appreciate it as much as they did then.
- G: I was going to say, students have a lot of other interests now to keep them occupied. Maybe back then they would come to you if they had a problem. Now they have other places to go and they can't be bothered to stay five or ten minutes after school.
- M: Now it's the teacher's fault if they don't know something, or it's the teacher's fault if they get into trouble even though they're the ones that are doing something wrong. It's the teacher's fault if you get caught or the rules are stupid. We thought that some of our rules were stupid too, but they were rules so we abided by them. I don't know as we had the idea that the school owed us an education. We were there to learn. Parents saw that we were there to learn. Parents expected us to learn and to behave. Now I think everybody thinks--I go to school as I don't have anything better to do. You owe me. I showed up in your class; I'm doing you a favor. I think it's a trend in our whole society. It goes into our welfare program. It goes into our aid. It goes into everything. You owe me, not what can I do to help myself or what can I get out of it, but you owe me.
- G: Now you said you played in the band. What instrument did you play?
- M: Drums.
- G: Can you tell me a little bit about how the discipline was handled when you went to school?
- M: We had a principal that we very seldom ever saw. When you saw him, you shook.
- G: Do you remember his name?
- M: Mr. Beman Ludwig, who is now dead. We had a dean of girls and a dean of boys. They handled disciplines, absences, and all other problems. The principal was mainly the administrator. Later on as the high school grew, I understand they also got an assistant principal, as well as the principal, as well as the dean of girls and dean of boys.
- G: In other words the principal didn't come in the classroom very much?
- M: You never saw the principal.
- G: Now if you did something wrong is that where you were sent? You were sent down to the principal?

- M: No, you were sent to the dean of girls or the dean of boys.
- G: And then if they needed to be handled in a different context then they would send them to the principal?
- M: Yes, but very seldom. He was more or less just simply an administrator. The superintendent of the schools as well as the principal, dean of boys, and dean of girls were all in the same building with the high school. You never saw any administrator.
- G: What were the facilities like when you first came here to United when you started in 1958?
- M: We have added since then mainly classrooms. The gym where I work most of the time has not been changed. The classrooms that have been added are all up through the cafeteria and the offices. The band room and chorus room have all been added and the upstairs.
- G: Enrollment when you first started, can you remember what it was?
- M: Enrollment was small. Classes were fairly small. Naturally, we didn't have as many teachers so we didn't have as many classes. They were still small. Basically, the students that went here were students whose parents had gone to school here and who have lived here almost exclusively all their life. It wasn't until probably in the early 1960's that we started getting the transit type people. In the last ten years we have gotten many people moving away from cities who are now living in this area.
- G: You came in 1958 and the school started when?
- M: About 1952 as I had the first graduating class in 1959. In the fall of 1954 construction was begun on United High School. The building was dedicated October 9, 1955. At first they just had freshmen and then added a class each year until they had a four-year school by 1959.
- G: So the first graduating class was in 1959?
- M: Yes.
- G: What was a typical day like at United back in 1958 when you started? Just run down about when you came into school. Did you have to sign in? How long did you have for lunch? How many classes did you have?
- M: We were in a schedule similar to what we do now, except we did not have three lunch periods. We had only two. All the

junior high ate at once. All the high school ate at once.

G: Did that make it pretty crowded?

M: No, not too bad. It wasn't as such that we had that many per se, in the seventh grade or eighth grade or in the high school. Everybody ate their lunch. The cafeteria was down where the elementary cafeteria is now. Everybody went down there.

G: Did the teachers eat along with the students?

M: No, the teachers always had a place to eat away from the students. You had basically the same half-hour lunch period. I can't remember whether we had a six period day or seven period day. We had a homeroom in the morning.

G: What time did school take up?

M: I can't remember.

G: In other words, homeroom teachers had to take roll and then went on in with their classes?

M: Yes.

G: Do you remember what time you got out?

M: Three-thirty, I think.

G: You mentioned that it wasn't as crowded then as it is now. How many kids did you have in a class?

M: Classes averaged between twenty and twenty-five.

G: Did you only teach gym or did you have health along with that?

M: I only taught gym when I first came here. I have since taught gym and English, and gym and health.

G: Health was not required back then?

M: Yes, health was required.

G: You just didn't teach it?

M: I didn't teach it in the junior high. It was in with their science program and the high school; I can't remember how it was handled there.

G: Well, today you have a class of health now, don't you?

M: No, Mr. McDavis has a class of health.

G: He takes both the girls and the boys then?

M: Yes, they're coed classes.

G: We know now that we have coeducational classes in gym. Were they coed when you first came to United?

M: No, we have only had coed in the last three or four years.

G: Do you like coeducational or would you just rather be off again by yourself?

M: For some things I like coed, other things I do not. I think there are advantages to having coed. I think boys need to know how to treat girls and that there are differences in abilities of girls. They need to be sympathetic towards girls of lesser ability. I think some girls get shoved and hidden in the background with coed classes because you don't have time to work with them. You don't have time maybe to spend on teaching and working with the girls with lesser ability in coed classes. Now there are many things you can do in coed classes that you can't do [in non-coed]. For instance, you can do dancing in coed classes that girls don't particularly like to do just with girls.

G: How did the boys handle that?

M: Dancing?

G: Yes.

M: We don't have dancing. We don't teach dancing. Our facilities are very poor in the gym.

G: I was just wondering how they accepted that.

M: We would like to add it. But if and when we do add it, we will start with the junior high. We can't start, I don't think, that with the high school. We have noticed a difference in our high school students who have had coed as seventh and eighth graders from when we first started. We also noticed a difference in the type of students we have in class.

G: Could you elaborate? You said that the students probably were more disciplined back then and their parents probably took a little more interest in how they behaved in school as compared to now. Is there any other major difference that you see in student behavior from when you started in 1958 and maybe till the present?

M: I think students had more respect for teachers, but I don't think it's necessarily limited to teachers. I think it goes to parents, law authority figures, ministers, and anybody



who has a control over them and can tell them what to do, what not to do, when to do it, and when not to do it, and how to behave that they don't particularly take to.

G: Back then they seemed a little more apt to taking corrective criticism.

M: Well, we complained. We had names for teachers, but it was not open. I mean we didn't openly defy teachers, We would have no thought of smart-mouthing a teacher. We just didn't do it. I don't think it was fear. It was that we knew that if we got in trouble at school we were in trouble at school. I don't think I ever feared that a teacher would belt me one. But they were an adult. They were my teachers. I was expected to behave and to conduct myself in a certain manner. That was the way I conducted myself.

G: Today how do the students treat you in gym?

M: I think the same as they do any other teacher in any other classroom.

G: I mean from being here that they respect you, but every year it seems like it gets a little bit harder, doesn't it?

M: Yes, it does.

G: Who would you maybe contribute that to? We talked about parents and peer pressure. If there was one that you would have to pick what would it be?

M: I don't think you can set it as one. Society, if you want to limit it to one thing, society as a whole. I have seen and heard students talk to their parents like I never would have talked to my parents. I would have picked myself up off the floor if I had talked to my parents the way some of them talk to their parents. Some of these parents are getting along, maybe not by choice, on very little education. So they do not see the value of an education. They are not pushing their children to get an education. If you don't have a good education and you can't get a good job, then live on welfare.

G: That seems to be the problem. At least I see a lot of kids coming from broken families. A kid is maybe coming from a family that is on welfare so that's all they see.

M: We were talking once; several women in the faculty thought it might be interesting to take a survey of our children from the eighth grade down and see the number of students that have one parent or have one mother and a stepfather or a stepfather and stepmother or multiples of each, who come from broken homes and live on welfare. This area is considered an Appalachian area, actually. We have many children that if we knew what kind of home life they have, what kind of

homes they live in, and what kinds of meals they have, we would be very surprised that they are able to accomplish what they do accomplish.

G: Well, the school here has those records, do they not, the students and their background and that? If the teachers wanted to they could go in and look, couldn't they?

M: We could find out whether they have a mother and no father or a father and no mother. You can't always tell whether it's a stepmother or stepfather unless the names are different. You can't tell whether they have running water in their house or whether they have a furnace, whether they are getting a good meal or not, whether the father beats the mother or the father beats the kids, or whether the mother beats the kids. You can't tell those things by records. Some of our children live with that every day.

G: Taking a look at some of the principals that you've been under, there are probably what, three of those? You've been under three principals. Let's see, I've looked at Mr. Carter, Mr. Janek, and Mrs. Anderson.

M: Yes, and Mr. Solak and Mr. Gyugo.

G: Okay, that was five of them. Is that about it?

M: Yes.

G: Could you just briefly tell us a little bit about each one of the principals if you would, starting with Mr. Gyugo?

M: Mr. Gyugo, very strict, a very strict disciplinarian and sometimes overly strict. When he came, he came in a time when we needed that. You couldn't be democratic about things. He came at a time where we needed a person to straighten out the school and that's what he did.

G: Could you relate back to maybe the principal that you had in Salem where you didn't see him very much, but if you went to him you knew you were in trouble? Was he some sort of guy like that or did you see him a little more often?

M: We always see the principals here because they are right in the building. They have to take care of everything. Mrs. Anderson's role was different from any principal that we ever had. We never had an assistant to the principal before.

G: So that takes a little bit of her job away from her then, is that what you are saying, with the assistant principal?

- M: I don't know in this day and age how she could do anything else with the paper work and everything else as it is set up. I think she needs to get out in the halls more and see what is going on. I think she need to see, other than just visiting classrooms. I think she needs to see what goes on in the school. Maybe she does and I just don't see it. All other principals had to handle everything, discipline, paper work, and all the other things that go in the school. But as we have progressed and become a larger school, not only that, but as government has stepped in as times have changed, you need four copies of this and ten copies of that, and fill out a paper for this and fill out a paper for that. So I don't see how she would have time to do anything else.
- G: Anything else on some of the other principals that you've been under? Anything you can remember, how they treated the teachers and how they treated the students and major incidents? How about Mr. Carter?
- M: Mr. Carter was well-liked. He was here at a time where we didn't have to have such strict discipline. He had discipline. I don't think you can limit this to just principals. I think you have to go to both ends of the scale, teachers and school board.
- G: Yes, I don't think you would have one without the other. I'm sure if the principal wanted a lot of discipline it would have to go back upon some of the teachers again, a lesson in class and doing it in class.
- Okay then, you very simply think that both the administrator's and the teacher's job has to work hand in hand?
- M: Definitely.
- G: Over the years that you've been here then you would say that at least these five principals have probably done a fair share of getting discipline done?
- M: Within their limitations, yes.
- G: Okay, you did mention a little bit about the board. We all know that the school board hires the principals and hires the teachers and that. They are the ones that hopefully are going to support the teachers and principals. Here at United would you say that they have done that to a certain extent?
- M: As much as I know about any situation that came up, yes, I think they have. I think there are certain situations that have come up that maybe I didn't know the whole story and didn't need to know the whole story or wasn't aware of the whole story.

- G: Do you at all have any personal friends on the school board?
- M: I know all the people that are on the school boards. Personal friends, no. Two of them are former students here.
- G: Did you have them in class?
- M: I had Mrs. Cozza in class and Mr. Conser was here at a time before we had coed. I have known him and his family for quite a few years, but as far as being personal friends, invited to their house or them coming to my house, no, we're not that personal of friends. I feel that I am friends with them. I can talk to them.
- G: Nowadays the school board and the teachers get into big arguments, especially over the problems of salary and things of that sort in the school. Do you know of any incident, at least since you have been here, that the school board and maybe the teachers' union, which probably started just about ten years ago, have had any major problems?
- M: No major problems that haven't been worked out, eventually. The school board played it tough at times and I think they think they are protecting the interests of the community. I think that they do what they think is for the best. Teachers are realizing and have realized for several years that we have to live according to salaries made by people who work in industry, consequently we have to have salaries that are commensurate with their's in order to live. I know it has become a problem with teachers, but it has also come to the point where school boards do not have any problems hiring teachers. There's an abundance of them. We may have a problem here because of our location and our type of community, et cetera.
- G: When you started back in 1958, could you roughly give us your salary?
- M: I can't even remember. I started out teaching school in 1951 for \$2,500 a year.
- G: But at that time, of course, inflation wasn't as high as it is now. You could live pretty comfortably on \$2,500.
- M: Right.
- G: Would you say that in 1958 the time you started at United you were making maybe \$5,000?
- M: I would say that that's close, about \$5,000.
- G: Then in those early years, let's say from 1958 to maybe the middle 1960's there had been no real major teacher-school board confrontations between salaries at that time?

- M: No major ones. It has come down a couple of years pretty close to where it could be considered major.
- G: Now, of course, you didn't have unions then, did you?
- M: Not when I first came. What has happened, I think, not only with our school board, but with school boards all over the country, and I don't know the answer to it, is that they all are desperately in need of money to run their schools. Teachers are in abundance, so why should they pay somebody \$15,000 a year to teach in their school when they can hire a beginning teacher for less and save money. Now this is a shame. I am at the point right now, I cannot leave here until I retire. Nobody can afford to hire me. Yet when I leave they will be able to hire probably one and a half new teachers.
- G: At a salary a lot less than yours.
- M: That's the way they'll get the one and a half teachers. School boards are also at a position now to say to teachers, this is what we'll give you and this is what we will do for you and if you don't like it, get out. Many school boards have been told, only hire beginning teachers. That's all we can afford. Our school board is probably worse off than a lot of school boards because we don't have industry.
- G: Right, this is a rural area.
- M: We don't have it. Most of our money comes in from our property taxes. We don't have industry. We don't have a railroad. We don't have a lot of other things that pay into our school district.
- G: That, very simply, would have a lot to do with not being able to pay the teachers, although the union that you have now seem to be fairly strong. How does it do?
- M: They're becoming more unified.
- G: The OEA [Ohio Education Association], right?
- M: Right. The UEA [United Education Association] is local and the OEA is state, although we get a lot of help from the state.
- G: So as long as you've been here there have not been any teacher's strikes per se?
- M: Never had a strike since I've been here. Close to it a couple of times, but never had a strike. Always the school board and the teachers were able to work it out. They gave and we gave. Sometimes we gave more and sometimes they gave more, but we always were able to work things out.

G: When you started at United in 1958, did you have to go 180 days? Was that still school policy then?

M: No, 175. I think it was 175.

G: Was that with teachers and students?

M: That was your school days you had.

G: 175, well, it has been changed. We know now that we go 180. You have those five extra days.

M: It might have been 172 for students and 175 for teachers. Another thing that has come into play that school boards have to take into consideration now is that in order to compete with industries they also have to start giving fringe benefits, which they didn't before. So in addition to additional salaries, they have to start looking at paying for hospitalization now. We also have a dental program now.

G: But you didn't have back in 1958?

M: We didn't have when I first started. I don't know how many more programs they are going to be able to afford or how many we're going to be able to ask for and get. But they didn't pay those then. They didn't have to consider those in their budget as they do now. And they are going to have to consider those if they are going to try to get quality teachers and compete with industry. After all, where did our doctors come from? Where did our lawyers come from? Where did our technicians come from? They all had to come from a school system some place. In order to get quality teachers they have to be willing to pay for them. Experience brings something to the teaching field.

G: You've been teaching since 1951?

M: Yes.

G: So you've got thirty years of teaching experience. And I'm sure that your knowledge would be a lot better than a teacher coming right out.

M: Well, that doesn't mean that I can't learn or that I stopped learning or that I can't do different things differently than I have just because I'm a teacher with thirty years. I don't do things the way I did in 1951. It doesn't mean that beginning teachers are not good teachers, but I hate to see them say, "You're a good teacher, but you have too much experience and we can't afford to hire you." This is happening to teachers that have only been teaching three years.

G: They just get caught up in that salary schedule don't they, and they don't want to pay those?

- M: Well, they can't afford to. They don't have the money. They can't afford to hire. If they need three new teachers they can't afford to hire three teachers with fifteen years experience.
- G: When you were going to college--let me go back just a little bit--what made you become a teacher? Did you just say that this is what I'm going to be and go ahead and do it?
- M: I went to college with the knowledge that I was planning to be a teacher. There were a lot of things that I didn't learn in college that are related to the teaching field. There were a lot of things that, I think, have changed in college and they are now being counseled on--about retirement and many other things that come up that you didn't know. But I always knew when I went to college that I wanted to be a teacher.
- G: Now, I think, nowadays, they may probably, like you said, counsel them and they will tell you about the salaries compared to maybe other industries, which, I think when you started they didn't do that.
- M: I don't think there was that much difference. I think teachers were probably some of the higher paid people in the communities. I think it has just been in the last twenty years that everybody else's salary has shot past. But you consider the steel company could afford to give their workers forty cents an hour raises and pay all their medical bills, because in order to make that up they just raised the price of their steel. Our school cannot say, "We'll do that for you, because we'll just raise taxes."
- G: Right, and before we can do that we've got to get the levy passed.
- M: This is the only thing now where people have a chance to say, "No, I will not spend more money." They get their gas bill and the gas has gone up. They get their electric bill, the electric has gone up. Now, schools are the only thing they have a chance to say, "No, I'm not spending any more money." So nothing is getting passed.
- G: So you are saying that when you went to college you knew you were going to be a teacher so no one in college really influenced you in any way to become a teacher then?
- M: Not to become a teacher. I had several good professors when I was in college who influenced me by ideas about teaching.
- G: Do you think teaching for a woman is an ideal position?
- M: It used to be. Now with more women going into industry and into business and into many other things that women did not do when I was in college, there are many more opportunities

for them with more money. Very few girls were pro athletes. Very few women drove trucks. Very few women climbed telephone poles. Very few women worked on a construction crew, which they all do now and consequently they make money, commensurate to the men in those fields. If they had done those things then I may not have been a teacher. I was a tomboy. I liked working outside. I liked being outside. I may have been a truck driver; I may have driven a bulldozer; I may have climbed a telephone pole, if those things were available for women. Now when I'm talking about women, I don't mean the female sex. What we're talking about is what a lady was supposed to be and do. Women did not do those things.

- G: Do you think that if you were exposed to some of the other things you may not have become a teacher? Do you regret becoming a teacher.
- M: Yesterday, maybe, yes; today, maybe no, or today no; tomorrow yes. It's not fun. I don't mean it has to be a barrell of laughs. But teachers burn out. You read all kinds of articles about teachers burning out. You do a lot more disciplining. You have a lot more pressures. You have to work a lot harder. It all goes back to this idea of you owe me, not I came here to learn. What can you teach me? I want to learn anything that you can give me. If I come, I'll dare you to teach me something.
- G: Would you say then that your years at United were ones of backage from the school boards and ones of, say, that the students were fairly cooperative with you and it has not been a tough job for you the last twenty some years?
- M: We have had some of the nicest people pass through these halls. Some of them I hope I have made an impression on. Some of them, I know, have made an impression on me. Some of them I hope will be my friends for quite a long time. Maybe it's an ego trip, but it gives me a certain satisfaction when I have students that have become not famous, but have just become a good individual and a nice part of the community, a family person, and come back and you can sit and talk or stand and talk to them, find out what they are doing and how their children are, et cetera. There have been many school board members who have come and gone, always I think, within what they believe was right and wrong and have been very cooperative. Maybe what I thought and what they thought were not always the same, but we never had any major disagreements.
- G: Well, is there any interesting or maybe different incidents here at United that maybe sticks out in your mind that you can remember, whether they would be funny ones or whether they would be on the serious side?
- M: Well, when I first came here I was cheerleader advisor for 7th grade, 8th grade, freshmen, reserves, and varsity for no



- pay. I probably saw more football games and more basketball games than a coach did. I was in on the beginning of girls athletics here. I coached at the very beginning.
- G: What sports?
- M: Volleyball, basketball, and track, all for fifty dollars.
- G: What year, do you remember?
- M: No.
- G: Middle 1960's?
- M: It had to be. When did they say to women, "Here it is, you take it."
- G: Okay, it's probably around 1965 I would say.
- M: Whenever they said, "This is it." Some of the parents said that, "If we don't have a team for girls, we'll take you to court."
- G: Did you like that? Did you like coaching?
- M: I enjoyed the relationship with the girls. I enjoyed working with the girls. All three were too much. My idea of athletics and their ideas sometimes didn't agree, I mean as to what a team member was supposed to be.
- G: Would you think that they are putting a lot more pressure on winning nowadays than should be?
- M: I've always thought that.
- G: Do you think that if you can bring it back to having intramurals and just letting the kids participate and not keeping score that maybe there would be a lot more participation in there?
- M: Definitely. I think it needs to go clear back and get rid of all the little leaguers.
- G: You think they are starting too young then?
- M: Yes, I think they need to learn fundamentals, but they can learn them in a different type situation, not in a stress situation, not when their body isn't ready, but--I've got to go out there and hit someone three times bigger than I am. If I don't get him out of the game, my team won't win and it's my fault.
- G: Is that maybe one thing that got you out of coaching, that aspect right there?
- M: Yes, definitely. I've always said when girls athletics came

in, if winning became more important than the game I would get out. Now, you never play a game unless you intend to play to win, but when that game is over with, you say, "Where did we make our mistakes? We don't want to make these mistakes again," not "the referee is crooked," or "they cheated," or this and that. Parents are on your back, "Why didn't you play this one? Why didn't you take this one out? You didn't do this right. You didn't do that right." If my job ever depended on that, whether it was tiddlywinks or jacks or whatever, I'd get out. Some of the things I really enjoyed were the girls we had in track. The first girl's state track meet they had we sent a freshman. The next three years and from then on we've qualified more girls for the girl's state track than the boys that had qualified for the boy's state track. I've gone several times with the girls as coach, assistant coach, chaperone. There have been some wonderful experiences not only at the state track meets, but at the track meets, basketball games, to see them progress and to work with them. Those are the fun things, not when the girls have to feel the pressure that they have to win, they have to win, they have to win.

- G: Track is also probably more an individual sport than a team in a sense, right? Although, you do have the medleys and the relays. There's still individual type things also.
- M: Right.
- G: Any other highlights that you can think about, interesting or that stick out in your mind?
- M: No. It's nice to say when you pick up the paper and you read a student from United has gotten their doctorate or they have been appointed to this position or that position or they have accomplished this or that and say, "I knew them when . . ." Many of them you can say, "I never thought they would be able to do that because they were in a little trouble when they were in school."
- G: That's the satisfaction. That's the pay, maybe, that teachers get.
- M: Right.
- G: When you read about that and maybe when somebody comes up and talks to you after they've graduated.
- M: When somebody comes back and says to you, "I'm glad you made me learn this," or, "I remember when you did that." They don't have to be famous people. I remember one particular incident. A young man works at the hospital. I don't know what you call his position, whether he's an orderly or whether

he's an LPN [Licensed Practical Nurse]. I don't know what his position is. I know he goes around to take things to the rooms. He gives the men their shave and helps bathe them and things like that. He has taken care of my dad several times when he has been in the hospital. He said, "I'm glad you made me learn this." One thing he said to me, "I remember one thing about you, you were always fair." That makes me feel good. That makes up for some of the bad times that I had.

- G: Miss Mellinger, thank you very much. Is there anything else that you would like to say that maybe we've overlooked?
- M: No, I can't think of anything more. We could probably sit here and talk for hours on what happened here and what happened there and this individual and that individual. I don't know all the things you are trying to get into this report, but I can't think of anything else.
- G: Well, thank you very much.
- M: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW