INTERVIEW WITH
BEVERLY BROOKS FLOE
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Sloan Oral History Series

B: BEVERLY FLOE
G: GEORGE ROTH

G: I have just turned the recorder on, and you've agreed to be recorded, so thank you very much.

As you know from the conversations we've had in the past and the letter I sent you, Bob McKersie and I have been doing oral history interviews with some of our senior faculty members about their memories of the Sloan School and its development. We've mostly focused on –

B: By the way, I have done this before. I've worked on the history of Abbot Academy, called "A Singular School," as well as for some books published by MIT Press.

G: Ah. Wonderful.

B: So I have done much of the interviewing for it. I did not write the book. Susan Lloyd did. But, I have know-how of this year, so it may save some time.

G: Very good. What we're interested in is for you to tell your stories and recollections of the development of the Sloan School, which you have a very particular view on, since your father was the founding dean, EP Brooks. I'm wondering if you can recall your family's—or certainly his—move to the Boston area.

I know you have another connection with MIT in terms of your husband. So you've had many associations there. But we're particularly interested in Dean Brooks and the Sloan School. So, as you know from this process, I will say as little as possible, and give you a chance to talk. If anything is unclear, I'll just ask for some clarification.

B: Well, questions help along the way. Feel very free to poke me up and get me going. But I'll give you a little bit of historical background. I was running the MIT Press at the time my father was – I guess he was then on the MIT Corporation so we saw him frequently. He and my mother were living outside of Chicago. He was then vice president for factories with Sears Roebuck, and a director of Sears.

I think he was 56 at that time, and within four years of retirement from Sears Roebuck. I had then been at the MIT Press for a couple of years, and it was growing very happily, and interestingly. My father, being on the MIT Corporation, would come frequently for meetings, so we would get together as we always did whenever we could. After one of our dinners, he wrote me a letter. We talked at dinner, and he said what he was doing at MIT and on the board was chairing a committee for a study of whether MIT should have such a thing as a business school. So we talked about that. He said, yes, he really thought they should, but he was going to do a more extensive study with a group addressing it. He was chairman of that group.

Some time later, perhaps weeks and months later, I got a letter from him saying, "The decision has been made that MIT should have a business school," or rather, "a school of management."

G: I believe it was a school of management at the time, rather than a business school.

B: Well, I think all these ideas were up in the air at the time in order to study it very thoroughly from every angle. He said, "MIT has decided they'd like to have a school of management, and I've been put in charge of finding someone to be the founding dean. Our group is just going on because we have met lots of people in the study that we've been doing."

Maybe six months later or so, he wrote me a letter and said, "Bev, we haven't been able to find anyone who we think is really fitted for this. MIT's asked me to do it. What do you think about that?"

He said, "I'm within three or four years of retirement. I'd have to give up a lot of my perks at retirement from Sears. I've been there for many, many years. Love it dearly." Well, he didn't put it that way. But he did love it, and he had worked happily and well there for a good many years.

So he said, "What do you think? I'd like your thoughts about it. And this will be teaching, which I have never done. And I'll be back in two months for the next meeting, anyway. We can talk always on the phone."

I began thinking about it. I was sitting at my desk at The MIT Press (then called The Technology Press)…

I can feel it right now. I had this several-page letter from Dad, written as he used to do Sunday afternoons. He would write his family letters, to his mother, to brothers and sisters, anyone he wanted to keep in touch with or owed a letter to. Owed letters probably got written during the week. But the family ones were always done Sunday afternoon.

I just dropped what I was doing, and sat there and thought about this. I thought, "I believe this – This is one of those things that's simply right. This is right for my father. It's right for MIT. And I have to just – well I'll call him, but I will write him," because it's much better to have a letter that you can refer back to and read over and question as things arise and then go back to again. I've written all over your letter, by the way. *[Laughter]* It's the way I do with letters and books. *[Laughter]*

Whatever I was doing at MIT got dropped at that moment. And for hours, and then a couple of days, I went on thinking about this. I thought, "Dad, you've always been a teacher. You have always, from the time I was tiny, tried to explain to me.

When I was six years old, I asked where the money had gone in 1929. 'Where did it go, Dad?' He was talking when mother came downstairs and said, 'This child is over-excited. She needs to go to bed now. Do not continue with this until tomorrow, if you must.'" So I went up to bed. But I was shaking; I was so excited with these ideas that were coming to me.

So, from the time I was tiny, Dad and I would talk about all kinds of things.

G: It seems like you had a very precious relationship with your father.

B: I did. It was a wonderful upbringing for me, both Mother, who saved me, *[Laughter]* and Dad, who inspired and tried to explain large concepts before I was ready, or as I was ready.

Anyway, I said, "Dad. You've always been a teacher. Don't fear that you haven't had any formal teaching education. I think this is made for you because you are going to do something new that hasn't been done, because of the ideas you talked to me about in the way of university or any other level of education in the country. It should be done."

Management is not properly appreciated and understood by—well, at that point it wasn't really yet television, but what was the equivalent of media at that time. It was treated either comically, or condescendingly, or as the cause of all our troubles, and it was simply not understood. I felt that a lot of our difficulties had to do with that complete misunderstanding, misconception, between what informed the average person – and this was in connection with just news – and what it meant. Dad and I had chewed that over before, because I knew something about it. I'd been editor of school newspapers from the time I was in middle school. I've always been interested in it. All these ideas were in the forefront of my thinking all the time. My friends of whatever age were the kind that would talk about that, and be interested in that with me. I had wonderful teachers as I grew up, I was blessed with that.

He and Mother – Well, I'll – If you'll bear with me, I'll take a step back. When my father was 4, in 1899, the Montessori School opened in Portland, Maine. My grandmother, an extraordinary woman, felt this was going to give an opportunity for a kind of education that wasn't available, or hadn't been to her, as she grew up. She thought it sounded very interesting. So she entered Edward, age 4, into the new Montessori School. He got on what was called "the electrics," which was a – just an electric…. something…. trolley. That's right. Well they were then called the electrics. She would put this 4-year-old on the electric, and he would go into Portland from what was then called Saccarappa, Maine, what is now called Westbrook. He got off and walked to the Montessori School every morning, and came back on the electrics. This is the kind of matrix in the family going way back to not terribly educated; the men were educated, but the women were not. But my grandmother went to the Hebron Academy, which was as close to a college as existed at that time.

I'll just move ahead. But that's just to give you some of the background.

G: Thank you.

B: So, Dad and Mother looked for the kind of school that would be the equivalent of what Grandmother attended. There was something called the Avery Coonley School just being created, built by Frank Lloyd Wright, part of an educational movement at that time called "progressive education." One was being built and opened in Downers Grove, Illinois, which was two towns away, out from Chicago to the west. They looked into it and decided this might be a good place for Beverly. I was given some tests, and entered in the first class that opened up., I was six and had already gone to a pre-school, and was being taught in French in Hinsdale, which was the town I grew up in. I was ready for regular school, first grade. I was reading and was quite bored with sitting in a row and reading a sentence, and then the next person read the next sentence, and so forth. So I was put in a wicker chair – I can see it now – facing away from the class, with a book, a second-grade book. Eventually I hopped to third grade and had one of the great teachers of my life, Miss Bertha M. Stevens, who wrote a book called *The Child and the Universe*, which had a great impact on progressive teaching at that time. So I went to a wonderful school.

In 1932, my father could no longer – try as he would, and did – afford to send me and my sister, to Avery Coonley. To his great regret, I was out of – in the middle of the year –

they couldn't even afford to finish the year – and put in a public school, which had been – I was not going to go there for the reason that there were far too many children to a teacher, and there wasn't even an assistant. And the teaching was not at a good level, they felt. So, having had to put me into fifth grade in the middle of the year, Dad and Mother got on the school committee to make the schools better in Hinsdale, if that was what the problem was for them. So, this was their approach.

I said to him, "You didn't teach formally, but you certainly tackled education, right from the beginning of my life, I recall."

G: I see.

B: Then I said, "Remember when I got to high school, and at that point you were able to send me to Abbot Academy? I was given what was called a merit scholarship, which did not have to do with finances, it had to do with how well you did in school. But you turned it down because you said, from the time he knew that my mother was pregnant, he had put by five dollars a month, and then five dollars a week sometime later, for my college education. So you certainly have been interested in education from the very beginning. He said that someone else who can't afford to go to Abbot but who should go to Abbot should have this scholarship.

Then, later, I reminded him that "you were still working in Hinsdale with the school committee. You felt it was very hard, and some of your friends felt that their children found it very hard, to decide what to do with themselves when they finished high school. Should they go to college? Or should they go to a trade school? Or should they not go at all, and just plunge into their father's business? What should they do? You came up with this idea. You had friends because of your strong belief in citizenship. In Chicago, of course, with Sears. You had run what they called the Red Feather Drive, which was – what is it for? The thing that collects all the charities. They were an attempt during the Depression to gather them under one drive sometimes called the "United Way." So you gave to one, and you gave all you could possibly give, and then you would not have to make a new decision every time a charity asked for money. Dad ran the one in Chicago, getting this charity to be organized through your place of business and supported by it. That's how he got to know many of the top businessmen in Chicago, both with his Commonwealth Club, and all the business groupings in Chicago. Many of them lived in Hinsdale. And we got to know them by also riding horseback every Sunday together.

G: So he was very involved in the community, not just the schools, but in the charities and other groups in the Chicago area.

B: He was involved in many ways. Many became social friends that he would see. It wouldn't have any particular common interest except maybe fishing or hunting or something of that kind. Anyway, he got them together, and said "If Carol, my wife, would put on dinner—no, not dinner, couldn't afford it—dessert and coffee, once a month, would one of you – Tom Willis, will you come and describe what your day as top lawyer is like? What happens when you come in and sit down at your desk? What do you do throughout the day?"

There were two other lawyers. One was for commercial business. And there were criminal lawyers. And there were the kind that took care of your wills.

G: He had these people talking in the schools? Is that where that happened?

B: He had them talking in our house, with a big sweet dessert and a cup of coffee. The next month it would be someone else who ran the bank or the grocery store or the shoe store and lived in Hinsdale. The next month there would be someone who taught outside of school. He went through all the significant professions and work experiences. Then he talked with the head of the high school, would he think it was a good idea to put up a paper to have students sign up who would like to come to these get-togethers?

The superintendent said, "I certainly would."

So Mother probably tacked it on the bulletin board in high school and anywhere from 8 to 15 to 24 students began coming. I was out of college by then.

I did remember to write that to him in my letters and my phone conversations, which were expensive then. I said, "Look. This is teaching. This is what you've been doing. And it sounds to me as if it's in this pattern of what MIT's talking about, in a way [laughter].

I said, "I think this is a perfect fit. Go for it. And you don't have to educate. I'm out of college. Carol, my sister, is almost finished with college. Bob is at Andover, and he is doing well, and you can pay for him if he needs more as time goes on."

I said, "You don't owe anybody anything at this time, except what you love, and what matters to you in the world. Go do it."

G: You were a great encouragement.

B: So, this might not be the push that he needed, but it certainly helped in that direction at MIT. And of course I was deeply interested in it as it progressed.

As time went on, we talked about things like his urge to have non-academic people teaching in his school, just business people, people who had been in that world, and who had succeeded in that world. They were to be his faculty.

He was not taking any faculty from what he called academe. He said, "I'm having a very hard time, Bev, because they're taking huge cuts in salary. They're taking a different way of living. They're having to move, most of the ones I know, from the Midwest to New England, and it is part of a large, significant problem in staffing the school."

He said, "The times of working will be different. The kind of work that they're doing will be different. But they will bring real, tough experience, what has succeeded in their lives in business, and how to inspire, as well as inform these young people."

Then he went to work on MIT and said, "What you pay your professors is a scandal. It is time for you to realize you're competing with top brains in this country who are now going into business and at MIT there are people who love to teach, who are good at it, because they wouldn't be that long at MIT if they weren't. These are people who would love to teach something different. They're born teachers, but they're not being paid properly – and they should have the equivalent pay to people who are good at their job – when they do that. And this has to do with your classes in totally different business. These teachers should be paid much better than they are when they're good, and only if good." [Editing note: This was a reference to tenure, and he said it make it impossible to get rid of mediocrity.]

He said, "I can't get any business brains at what you're paying. And you shouldn't pay top teaching brains what you squeeze out for them. MIT said, "Oh, we've always encouraged them to have outside jobs and things like that to increase their income." And that is not the way it should be done. Now they get perfectly obscene salaries, sometimes. At that time

they didn't. So he was working both ends against the middle, which erupted, eventually, with the school. Let's see what's next.

G: May I ask you a question, Bev? Can you tell me a little bit more how you came to Boston? What got you to the MIT Press?

B: Yes. I don't know if you've ever heard of Harold E. Lobdell, who was the Dean of Admissions for 25 years, which is too long, at MIT. He was in Dad's Class of '17. He'd been in and out of our house all my life, and Dad would bounce some of his ideas off Lobby. He talked to Lobby about where Bob, six years younger than I, ought to go to school. I went to Abbot. He went to Andover, which was actually physically contiguous to Abbot. Bob went to a very good school.

But it was a question of batting off people at MIT and my teachers at the schools I went to before, and the people who were interested in education. I went to Swarthmore, which was another excellent educational experience for me. After two years, we were in the middle of the war, and I felt that Swarthmore was going downhill. I wasn't sure I was getting the education I really longed for at Swarthmore.

So I left school for a year, which was before people did that. *[Laughter]* I went to Radcliffe. The schools were beginning to break up and become coed. I looked at the University of Chicago. I looked at Berkeley. I looked at about half a dozen. I found they were having exactly the same problems that Swarthmore was. I knew the faculty, and I knew the school at Swarthmore, so I went back to Swarthmore.

Dad had Frank Aydelotte at MIT. Aydelotte brought the Oxford University method of seminars and honors work to Swarthmore, as president of that college. And my father felt that Aydelotte, who was one of his MIT professors … He made friends with professors, as I always did. My best teachers became friends, which was heaven. So because of Aydelotte at MIT, I chose Swarthmore. So I went from Hinsdale, Illinois, to Andover, Massachusetts, to Pennsylvania. I followed the best education I could find with the spearheading of my parents. So that's how I got there, it was connected with MIT, you see.

G: I see.

B: Does Aydelotte mean anything to you?

G: No. I'm not familiar. But I will look it up. So when you graduated from Swarthmore, you somehow got back and started working at the MIT Press.

Editing note: President Frank Aydelotte's nearly 20-year tenure as president of Swarthmore College is best remembered for the Honors Program he introduced in 1922. At its inception, it provided an experience that was otherwise unknown in American undergraduate education: an intense intellectual experience in which qualified upperclassmen studied subjects in small groups, without grades, for two years until evaluated by outside scholars.

Aydelotte had benefited from similar training as one of the first Rhodes Scholars, an experience that prompted him to replicate at Swarthmore the intense study and small

classes he found at Oxford University. The program's success was due in large part to his emphasis on raising the intellectual level of the college as a whole - hiring faculty who were experts in their field, reducing the student/faculty ratio, and making acceptance to the college more competitive.

B: I did because I didn't have a job. At Swarthmore, I took the Oxford honors course, which was very challenging. You get tested, not by your professors who taught you. You go once a week to a seminar. You take two seminars. You can't take more. And there are either three, minimum, or seven, maximum, in your seminar. Every week you read core material for the seminar, and you write a paper every week for an individual enlargement of your core. And that is distributed to the other members of your seminar. So they get some of what your studies have enlarged you with, and you get theirs. But you all have this central subject matter that you took the course for. And you take two of these seminars each week. I've lost track now.

G: Oh, my question was what brought you back to the Boston area and eventually had you working at the MIT Press, when you were meeting and talking with your father?

B: Okay. Well, you were examined at the end of your last two years at Swarthmore, not by your teachers. You were examined by top teachers brought from around the world. I was examined in Aesthetics by Ducassse from Princeton. I was examined in other subjects – you take a total of eight three-hour written exams, and their orals on your written exams. These are given by people who are top in the field that you studied, anywhere in the world. I had professors from Harvard. I think, though I'm not sure because I read their books.

But I was in a state of terror, because I'd never seen these people before. I didn't know what their pet theories were, and what they disliked. I should have trusted Swarthmore to give me people who were balanced, and who really were deeply interested in their field. All we had to study was the answers to old tests that had been given in the past at Swarthmore for honors. So I studied those, and the tests themselves, and the winning honors graduation papers. I did that all night and could not sleep. Then I went to a doctor, because I knew I had to sleep, but I wasn't able to. He gave me, what in the 1960s and 1970s became known as "uppers" and "downers." That is, he would give me something that would put me to sleep at night, then something that would wake me up to be able to work again the next day. This was not a good preparation *[Laughter]* for my honors exams. I got all my written exams done – 24 hours of written exams.

When I started my orals, I passed out in the middle of one of my orals, and had to be carried by the professor *[Laughter]* up to the clinic at Swarthmore and put to bed. So I was then told, three days later, that if I wanted to, I could take my honors exams over again in six months, and have another chance at doing well, if I wanted to. I said, "If they will pass me as having graduated from Swarthmore in class level, that's what I want to do. So Swarthmore very kindly gave me high honors, not highest.

I didn't know – in fact I had to be hunted when Phi Beta Kappa was passed out – I didn't think to go the meeting at all. They had to find me, actually go to where I was. But I went in a wrinkled shirt. I don't think we wore pants then. Anyway I got Phi Bete – but it was an awkward affair. Swarthmore was very, very kind. I passed with incomplete exams, which I don't think was maybe proper. But they were so kind.

Then I collapsed, and had—I don't know—a minor breakdown of some kind. I just couldn't manage to do much of anything for that summer following graduation, and I didn't have a job. Didn't know how to get a job. Dad kept up his connections at MIT, of course. It meant the world to him, always.

At the end of it, I think it was Lobby, who said, "Well, there's something that needs doing here. Why don't you apply for it. There isn't a job existing at the moment. But we do some publishing on occasion. It isn't a formal – it isn't a proper publisher, but we call it the Technology Press, because it's MIT. Why don't you go and talk to John Burchard, Dean of Humanities at MIT, and see if there's a job for you there."

So I went to see John Burchard. I walked in his door, having been ushered in by Margaret, his wonderful secretary, who kept him on the rails. He waved a paper he was reading, and said, "Well, here's a letter from your father. Isn't that a coincidence?" I turned around and walked out. He stood up and came after me. He said, "What's the trouble? What's the matter?"

I said, "I'm not coming in on my father's recommendation. If I am coming to MIT, it's on my own. Here is my resume of schooling, and that's all I've had." And I thrust it at him, turned around, and tried to leave.

He said, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. He's just gotten me a room at the University Club next week when I have to be in Chicago. That's what the letter's about." *[Laughter]*

G: I see. What year was that when you started working for the MIT Press?

B: 1947.

G: And your father was then still out in Chicago?

B: Let's see. He was at Sears. What year did he start at MIT? 1950? 1951?

G: Yes. You said he was on the MIT Corporation. You would see him when he came for meetings.

B: He was on the Corporation, and he was thinking in terms of something like what turned into the Sloan School. But he was on the Corporation. There was no Sloan School at that point.

And I had no job. It was really fascinating. The whole thing was kind of a mess, but when John pulled himself out of the mud and explained that his letter from my father was about a favor he had asked my father for, to get him a room, that's how I had an interview with John, very huffy, but I got the job, to try it out. He said, "There isn't a real job. But you might make one. There might be one. We need something like this."

So they pushed another desk into Margaret's room, and I began. We started it off with money from the Electrical Engineering series, which was a very successful text. If you want to make money, write a textbook, and get it accepted. That gave us money to try to publish something else, which we did. I remember one of the first ones – *Interpretation, Extrapolation and Smoothing of Stationary Times Series with Engineering Applications*, was one of the first ones. Then we did some others of that kind.

Then John was interested in writing a book himself, which he wanted to be sure to get published. I think it was called *Mid-Century*. I did some interviewing of professors and I did some work on the book. I just did work that needed doing on a book and so on.

At my [job] interview I said to John, "I have no education beyond a BA at Swarthmore. A good one, but I don't have anything beyond that in experience. And I certainly don't have a PhD."

He said, "You'd have to have one in 24 different subjects before that would do you any good. So forget that." I just started at the very bottom of getting something new organized. It was the best way for me to learn. I got to know people who were writing interesting books but couldn't get them published by commercial publishers. The original rules were that MIT had equity in the books we published [note made in editing – Equity in the sense that MIT had given paid time off to write the book]. They did not come from somewhere else. All together, it just grew.

G: Very good. Bev. May I focus us a little bit? What I would like to focus on is your father's coming to Boston, and the ideas – you've mentioned some of them – that he promoted. Maybe there were some others you were familiar with as well, in terms of starting the school.

B: I'm not organized well, right now, mentally. And so just blame it on being really very ill. And I'm not anymore. But I'll be delighted to talk to you another time if you can stand it.

G: Okay. We can continue, but let's focus on some of the ideas that he advocated, that you remember. You talked about his wanting to get business people teaching at MIT, and bring their experience, and the challenges with the differences in pay and expectations. For example, I think there was a period of time of also learning from Dean Davis, over at the Harvard Business School, and other people? Who were influences, people that your father worked with in establishing the Sloan School?

B: At MIT?

G: Yes.

B: Now you're probing my weakest point. The names? I'm not sure.

G: Maybe the influential ideas?

B: Jay Forrester, for instance. Many we had known for years, such as Jay and Kay Stratton. I traveled after I left Swarthmore. I went around the world in different odd ways. After I came back, I took an apartment in Cambridge and started looking for a job. We knew Jay and Kay Stratton. Mother called me in my apartment one day and said, "Kay Stratton had just called and asked us to a cocktail party. And she wants you to meet somebody there."

I said, "Well, I'm not going."

She said, "Of course you are. This is practically given for you. And you're just back from a year off. And you're not settled here. You don't know anybody here, yet, really. And of course you're going."

I said, "I will not be paraded in front of any man." [Laughter]

She said, "You're being very difficult."

I said, "Well, I intend to be. I'm going to be hard to please, and I am not going to be "paraded," but –

Anyway, Mother said, "You're going because it's very rude not to."

I said, "All right. But I'm not going to be shown off in front of anybody."

She said, "I will meet you there at six."

So we went. Carl Floe was there, and we got to talking – I wasn't aware that he was the one I was there to meet, fortunately. So we got talking about raw materials, because he felt that would be the only thing that was going to pull us out of future depressions and difficulties that we had in economics.

He said, "Where have you been, lately?"

I said, "I was in Australia for almost a year."

He said, "Well, that has a lot of raw materials."

I said, "It has perfectly terrible political messes, and organizations. And every one of its seven states has a different rail gauge. And it's really at the beginning of starting off. I could make a million dollars if I wanted to go there now, and start some businesses, but I have no capital." So that's how we met.

I eventually married Carl, and Kay was absolutely right. And so then – let's see – Carl branched out a little bit. Not very much. He was not a very social person. But Kay was, and so I got on her committees. And she was on the women's league; we had dinners here and there, and got to know people that way.

And through what Carl was working on, I would get into people in metals and metallurgy. I was very much a tree blossoming person. I would go out from a stem and follow the branches around. Everything has always been so very interesting.

G: You have one of those minds that likes different things.

B: Oh, everything. I would follow those things. There are so many things, always bubbling at MIT. Not necessarily connected with each other at all, fundamentally, or by subject or anything like that. But they would just hitch on to each other.

G: Very interesting.

B: I have to tell you about Norbert Wiener.

G: Okay. Please go ahead. Then I have a couple more questions I want to ask you. So please tell me about Norbert.

B: I met him when I applied for a job at MIT in the Lincoln Lab. I found out that it wasn't anything like what I thought it was, and after two weeks I resigned from it. They said, "You can't." I said, "Yes, I will. This is not anything I'm good at. And I don't want to do work in offices, like this." So I got out of Lincoln Lab. And that was an early attempt at a job.

While I was there, Norbert Wiener walked into the office. He made the same mistake I did, that this was a publishing affair, and brought me a manuscript for an article. So we

met. He corrected my English, and that got my attention. And he was correct, and I was wrong. It was "like" and "as," and I misused them, then we parted.

About a year and a half later, he came into the Technology Press. He had this school book, a spiral notebook. And, in pencil – which was awful – he had written a book called, *Cybernetics*. And he said, "I would like you to consider publishing this." I looked at it, and I took it home for a weekend. It was explosive. It was absolutely – it just exploded my brain. I brought it in on Monday morning. I said, "John, you have to read this."

He said, "What is it?"

I said, "It's Norbert Wiener. And it's a marvelous book."

He said, "What do you know about mathematics and that kind of thing?"

I said, "Very little, but this is something you can access as just a human being." So he put it on his desk. And it stayed there. And the next Friday I said, "Take this home and read it." I worked three weekends for him to get him to do it. And he was bored. He didn't want another book on math. He didn't want to publish any of this. I said, "John, you're going to be sorry if you don't read this book." I actually said, "If you do not read it, I am going to take it to another publisher." Well, that got him, because I was being flippant and female and young. So he took it home.

When he came back on Monday, he said, "You're absolutely right." So that was the beginning. We published it with a French publisher originally. Well, it was important. And that gave us a good boost.

Norbert was a German. Almost always bowed and scraped to me because my husband, very shortly, was a vice president. That just meant – an embarrassing amount, to me. I hate it. Anyway, I was in the hospital, and he was in the hospital at the same time, Mass General. I said, "Carl, he's here. I just want to say hi to him while – as we were walking out." And he almost got out of bed. It was so embarrassing to me. But we had these titles, and they meant a lot to him. And we're very glad we'd gone, because it made him feel good about himself. Isn't that something? Because we had called on him.

G: I have a question. Jonathan mentioned that one of the things you did – and you've also mentioned letters that you had, and correspondence from your father. Do you know anything about his archives? I can check with the MIT archivist, but are those things – did he have an archive set up in the MIT library?

B: Gosh. I doubt it. I'll tell you why, and it's very sad to me. After Dad retired he went through – and it's very hard to accept this, but it's true – he went through all his pictures, all his files and notes and so on. My brother is a totally different makeup. I was supposed to be a boy, and I wasn't. I was a great disappointment. And my brother was not a businessman. His mind is made up entirely differently. He is absolutely charming, or was. He's dead, now. And he was like my father's father, not like his mother. I was like Dad's mother. And he had an extraordinary wife. My mother was every bit as extraordinary as he was. But, he was a male chauvinist.

G: Those were different times.

B: Oh, they were. And he just could not – and it's so unlike his mind, really. His fairness, the things that were the best about him should have been – he gave me every

opportunity. And yet, I was – some of this you're just going to have to scratch, or I will. He tried over and over to help his son, who failed in business. He rescued him over and over again. He would have left everything to my brother had he not had a good friend – that he made after my mother died – and said, "You have three children. You don't have one son, only." And my father, being basically fair, was able to do, and give some of the things that Mother had left him to his daughters, and not only to his son. It's almost incredible to me that he could be so segmented this way. But he was.

However, he would never have done that in something like the Sloan School. He would not have kept women out. He – I don't know. It's still something that I argue with him about. And he's been dead for years. So, what is your question?

G: My question was whether archives had been set up, and whether any of the letters you mentioned might be there?

B: Oh. He went through everything and threw out everything except a single copy of pictures, and all the rest of them, threw out what Carol and I might have had in the way of pictures that were duplicates, and gave it all to Bob. Can you imagine? These were my ancestors, as well as my brother's ancestors.

G: Including his files from the Sloan School? I know Jonathan said you edited his speeches.

B: Let me see. I know Jonathan is looking into this, as well. I know one of Bob's sons will not. He's an artist, and he will not have interest in that. But the other one may well. I will get hold of him. I'll ask him tonight, when he's home from work. And we'll get back to you right away.

G: Oh, that would be great. Thank you. Do you have the letters that you exchanged with him as he was considering becoming the Dean?

B: I'm wondering. They must be somewhere. They're probably in some attic, here in the retirement community, and I will have to look into that. Fate is such, George, that I have been very ill. I am not able to be the person I was, yet. But I am coming back. And the very good doctor I have says with the kind of mind I have and the kind of body I have, I will come back. And I will do – because what you're doing is important I will do everything I can to help you on a really factual basis, which is what you need. And it's fun, sometimes, to go over these stories and memories.

I will see that you get them. I should have that letter, because it's the kind of thing I would keep. Or my father should have kept that letter from me, because he had files and files on that kind of thing. My letters were valuable to him. There should be my letter to him in his files.

G: Okay. I think that would be great.

B: So, I'll work. I'll do my best. That's all I can do. And as my superb grandmother said to me, "My dear, just do the best you can. Angels can do no more."

G: That's very nice.

B: Well, she was quite a wonderful woman. And she was the best of our father, as well. Thank you.

G: Thank you very much for your time.

B: And I'm sorry if I've just rambled.

G: Should I plan to call you back in three or four weeks, just to check in with you? Or would you like to call me.

B: Oh gosh, no. I'll go to work right away, after I have written a couple end of life letters, which I must write. I will get back you a soon as I have anything.

G: Well, thank you very much, Bev.

B: Of course.

G: I'll look forward to following up with you.

B: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW