

Frank Flaherty
Narrator

Cole Steinberg
Concordia University, Saint Paul
Interviewer

Landmark Associates
Transcriber

July 5th, 2022
Minnesota

CS: Cole Steinberg

FF: Frank Flaherty

CS: This is an interview conducted as part of a larger faculty and student research project initiated by Dr. Julie Luker of Concordia University Saint Paul. Today is July 5th, 2022, and I'm here with Frank Flaherty. My name is Cole Steinberg and I'm an undergraduate student at Concordia University Saint Paul. Today I'll be talking to Frank about what life was like growing up in the Twin Cities. During this interview, I'm going to ask you to reflect on your childhood life experiences as they relate to a variety of social topics from that time period. For the purposes of this interview, we have defined childhood as birth through 17 years of age. To begin, please state and spell your full name.

FF: Frank Flaherty. It's F-R-A-N-K, and Flaherty is F-L-A-H-E-R-T-Y.

CS: Please identify your race and gender.

FF: I'm an old white guy. How's that? Pretty good?

CS: Good.

FF: That covers it, right?

CS: Yep. Please state your date of birth.

FF: 2/28/56.

CS: Finally, please share where you grew up, such as the name of the neighborhood or nearby street intersection. Include any major moves you made during this time period.

FF: To start out with, when I born, I was at 358 Marshall. It was a house my parents were in with my aunt and uncle. It was a split house, and then they started having all these kids, and about six months after I was born, and we moved on to 2227 Dayton in Saint Paul. We were there until about 1965, and then we moved there up to 1872 Ashland in Saint Paul. Pretty much my mom stayed there until after I was out of high school and then she moved later, but that's where I grew up in those three areas. The first one on Marshall, I was only six months old, so I have no memories of that, so mostly between 2227 Dayton and 1872 Ashland.

CS: I'd like to learn more about your family life. Let's begin with the memories you have for immediate and extended family. Please share some memories that you have about these relationships.

FF: I had eight brothers and sisters, I had three brothers and five sisters, it was a family of nine. Had my mom and dad of course, and grew up Irish Catholic, and pretty much went to St. Mark's Church, St. Mark's grade school. All the kids went there. My three older sisters they went down to St. Joseph Academy 'cause then it's still open. I went to Cretin High School. Had a brother that started at Cretin and him and another one ended up at Central. Had another brother that ended up—he was at St. Agnes for a while. One of my youngest sisters, one went to school and did to LLP, and when they shut that, she ended up at Brady. I had another sister that went to—oh, I can't think of the name, out in Fridley, Catholic High School out there. Anyway, we all pretty much grew up Catholic in the St. Mark's area, Saint Paul.

All went to school there, and all graduated grade school there, and then everybody went different places for high school. Totino-Grace, that's where my sister went to, Totino-Grace out there, so she graduated from there. My three brothers are all passed now, but my five sisters are all—we're still pretty close family, pretty close knit. A lot of vacations together and stuff when they were younger. My dad loved to go up to the lake, so we used to go to the lake all the time and do a lot of fishing and swimming and boating and all that kind of stuff. It's a pretty tight family. Still are pretty much. You don't see somebody for a while, but you still talk. You pick up the phone and call 'em anytime you want to, I guess. Also, all of 'em spend most of their life here. My two brothers were down in Florida for a while, but everybody else has stayed in the Twin City metro area pretty much.

CS: Did you have any family pets?

FF: Cats. My mom wouldn't have a dog, but she'd have cats. Had cats when we were on 2227 Dayton, and then, I don't know, they got messy or something, got rid of them. My mom had Clyde the cat that was pretty good. Then my younger brother had two hamsters and that cat would sit there and watch those two hamsters all day long. Had an aquarium, he'd paw on the side of the aquarium, and they'd be running on the wheel in there. That cat finally got both of them.

That was the family cat, everybody loved that cat. He was black but he had a tuxedo look to him with the black, white. That was our pet pretty much. There was always some goldfish, but they don't last very long before they got flushed on the toilet or something. The two hamsters in the cat were pretty much—well, my mom did have a parakeet too, so that was there for quite a while. That's the bits.

CS: How were household chores divided between members of your family?

FF: Well, I had the five sisters that always told me how much they did, but they helped mom with the house and a lot with that. I did a lot of lawn mowing and stuff like that outside, they helped with that too 'cause I was playing football or baseball or something all the time. Mostly the kids were given chores to do, and then if you didn't do them or you gave mom a hard time, there'd come a voice from the living room, my dad would be out there, "Frank, shut up and do

what your mother says," and that kind of the way that worked. Pretty much everybody shared pretty much all the chores around the house anyway.

CS: Can you share a memory to help describe what mealtime was like in your family?

FF: My mom's favorite dish, she used to make chow mein. I guess one of my favorite stories is we had the front porch, it faced north, and in the wintertime, when it got cold, it was like a freezer out there, so she'd put the chow mein out there in the freezer. Everybody would come over, her sisters and brothers-in-law and stuff would all come over for chow mein, and she was really good. At one time, I don't know if you know what cold frozen chow mein looks like, but it's pretty ugly looking like somebody threw up. My mom had to pan it out on the stove, out in the porch like that, my sister brought home her boyfriend. He looked down and said, "What the heck is that?" And she told him, "That's dinner." My mom was a pretty good cook. A lot of hot dishes, but chow mein was her best, her favorite.

When that happened, people would show up from all over the place 'cause it was really good. She'd make the huge pot full of it, and it'd last. For nine kids, you make a huge pot of everything every time you do anything, but she'd make stuff that last a couple days. Lot of hot dishes, lot of different recipes, lot of just old home cooking type stuff. Once in a while you'd get some fancy things. Fridays and Lent were fish sticks, or my dad would make pizza. He'd make a tuna pizza, for being Catholic he couldn't eat meat on Saturday, Sunday—Friday, excuse me. That was one of his things, he'd like to do that.

Every once in a while, he'd make spaghetti, which was just delicious too. He'd spend a whole Saturday making meatballs, and there was always a line, it's not enough salt and not enough salt, that was his gig, but he made some pretty good. We all ate pretty good. There's nobody who went hungry at the house. My mom was pretty good at stretching stuff out, and making it work. Good tasting stuff too, she was a pretty good cook. Dad was a pretty good cook when he picked up his stuff too, so that was good, I guess, we had good food all the time.

CS: Next, please describe the ways in which your family's economic status influenced your childhood.

FF: Well, my dad was a lethal plate maker, and he made really good money. He worked a lot of overtime aside, but with nine kids, he almost had to have it. Mom didn't have to work. My dad had about three or four major illnesses, so there was quite a few times that he was off of work for long periods of time. It seemed like when he went back to work, then he caught up on all the finances and everything. Lethal plate makers made really good money and they could easily raise a family of nine, even in a big house in that. It was middle class, and there wasn't nothing extravagant or anything. He ended up dying of cancer in 1972 when I was 16. I was the fourth oldest, and that stretched things. We had a great aunt Molly, came in and paid off the mortgage for my mom. With social security and our pension, my dad's pensions, and stuff, we made a lot, did pretty good. We'd go to great aunt Molly, still thank her to this day for that.

Wasn't an awful lot of money now, but back then, it was a payment every month, a lot of money, I guess. It's pretty much the economics. My dad was sick, and he was out of work for a little bit in 1960, in 1966, in 1979, he had his hip done. He had a nephrotic syndrome in '66, which was a

kidney disease. Then he had his hip replaced, which didn't work because they were trying that, and '72 weeks got cancer and died. Otherwise, everything in between was pretty good. He made really good money for the time. He was middle class, so he did pretty good. Even he had some—between the union and the company, they had pretty good benefits for being sick, so it was cutting back, but it wasn't starving to death or anything like that, so that was pretty good.

CS: Now, I'd like to know more about your experiences with religion such as Catholicism, Lutheranism, et cetera. Describe what you can recall about your family's religious practices when you were growing up.

FF: Well, we were Irish Catholic, every Sunday we were at church one way or the other. I was an altar boy; my other brothers were altar boys for a while. Went to Catholic school, so had them good nuns that used to beat it into you. We're pretty much totally Catholic, still I'm Catholic church. I used to serve masses in the morning before school and on Sundays. Of course, you had religious education and stuff the whole time you were there too. When I went to Cretin, it was the same thing. It was still a Catholic school, pretty much Irish Catholic.

The neighborhood was—St. Mark's had a whole bunch of families with a lot of kids. If you only had four kids, that was a small family. Everybody had the Olson's and the Dylan's and the Pike's, and everybody had six kids or eight kids, something like that. It was a lot of kids. When I went to St. Mark's back in the '70s, they had, I think it was pretty close to 2000 kids in the grade school. They closed the school here not too long ago, and there were still 350 kids in that school. It was pretty much religious education the whole way through being Catholic, going to church on Sundays and during the week and everything else.

CS: What messages, if any, did you receive about interacting with, being friends with, or dating people from a different religion than yours?

FF: None. My parents were pretty liberal. That didn't matter to them. Back in the '60s, even with the—you had the equal rights stuff going on and everything else, they were pretty much liberal on all those issues. Dad had friends that had—like my mom's best friend and one of my parent's best friends, and she wasn't Catholic when they got married and they had to get married over at Sacred Heart Church in the east Saint Paul over there. They had to get married in the rectory, they couldn't get married in the church. They pretty much abhorred that kind of an idea or that old time fashion religion stuff. Everybody's equal, everybody's taking care.

Unless you were probably a Nazi or something, you were pretty much okay with my mom and dad. You were accepted into the house. The house was always welcoming to everybody. As long as you came in, behaved yourself, you were welcome, and that's the way I grew up. House was open to people to show up, and especially with all the brothers and sisters and their friends and all my mom and dad's friends and people they didn't know and everything. It was pretty much accepting who you are and what you are. As long as you didn't come in the house and misbehave, you were welcome always. Didn't matter, I don't think religion—if you had a religion, I think it was probably a little better than not having one, but even still then, you were still accepted, always.

CS: Now, I'd like to learn more about the neighborhood in which you grew up. If you moved

during childhood, you may wish to reflect on more than one neighborhood. This is fine to do, but please indicate as you do it. Please describe what comes to mind when thinking about the neighborhood in which you grew up.

FF: Well, on 2227 Dayton, where we've spent from about 1956 to 1966 or so, that was a middle-class neighborhood, some of it was a little upper class, we were on the edge of—some of the people there were professors and stuff like that. There was Russell Fridley used to run Minnesota Historical Society, by the way. He used to live across the street, my sisters babysat for him. Then as you went down the hill there on Otis and stuff, those were business owners in a little higher class. Everybody still was treated fairly well. There was a little bit of classing once in a while, but pretty much everybody was accepted.

Then when we moved over on Ashland, there was probably more just middle class, and people had worked for a living and some cooks and chefs and some small businesspeople, and so economically, that was pretty close. Everybody was pretty close together over there. It's all in the St. Marks area. Even if you moved from one neighborhood to the other neighborhood, you still were with the same kids in the classes that you were before, you still knew all the same—you'd get on your bike and ride back to the other place. It's all kind of one big neighborhood, there was a lot of kids there, so we had a lot of friends, a lot of people. Hopefully that answers what you're asking.

CS: Yeah. I do have a follow up here. There are a variety of ways to describe a neighborhood such as urban, suburban, rural, bustling, quiet, working class, upper class, et cetera. How would you describe your neighborhood when you lived there?

FF: It's just an urban neighborhood. Not too many businesses right there, it was just all homes. It was just a normal city neighborhood. Houses were on 40-foot lots and 40 by 150. Most of the businesses were on the—over on Grand or Marshall or somewhere like that, not in that area, so it was just a home community, I guess.

CS: How well did the residents in your neighborhood know each other, and what were some of those relationships like?

FF: Well, I think everybody knew everybody a little bit. Of course, we had the grumpy old guy next door, Mr. Hanky. He was the guy—well, I got nine kids in a 40 by 150-foot lot, so the ball would go over the fence, but he had these beautiful gardens, he had a beautiful yard, and he just didn't want kids in his yard or whatever. If the ball went over in his yard and you didn't go in his yard, he'd pick the ball up and throw it. If the ball went in his yard and you went over and picked it up, he'd be right outside hollering at you. Otherwise almost everybody knew everybody, it wasn't super friendly, but they were friendly, people were friendly to each other.

Bob Pike lived down the street, my dad grew up with him, so I grew up with a bunch of his kids, Jack and [Ronnie]. Everybody knew everybody, kind of watched out for each other's kids and stuff too. It was a good neighborhood except for Mr. Hanky, but he was good to us too. If you see an old grumpy guy, you give him respect, just part of the Catholic stuff. Respect your elders, then he took care of stuff. It was good deal.

He came over every year, he had a greenhouse on the back of his house, and every year he'd

come over and give us six tomato plants, and those suckers would—we'd plan to plant one there, I dug it all out and everything. We had better tomatoes than he did, I don't know, the ground was just right, I guess. He was pretty good. He was a plumbing contractor, so he owned his own plumbing business. That's the people over there, middle class, small businesspeople. Everybody got along. Everybody had kids, so a lot of big houses, a lot of four- or five-bedroom houses in that neighborhood.

CS: Describe what you can recall about your home, such as the layout and other features that come to mind.

FF: Well, not so much on Dayton, but on Ashland, that was the big house. That had, on the first floor, it had a huge kitchen with a big, huge kitchen table, then they had a dining room, you went around the corner, had a dining room with the old leaded glass windows and a buffet. Then you walked from there, you walked into the living room, and then there was an entryway on it too. It was the old-fashioned layout, a big farm kitchen type thing. That was the first floor.

Had a bay window in the dining room that had stained glass windows on the top. That was pretty cool. Then you went downstairs, there was a finished basement down there, which I ended up sleeping down there all the time anyway. Had a third bath, I would say, or second bath that was ratty, but still, my dad fixed it up a couple of times and it got a little better. Had a shower and a bathroom down there, and a laundry room. They had a tongue and groove pine all the way around the basement with it, and they had a built-in bar, and they had old, tiled floors.

They we went upstairs, there was a back door going out there too as you went up the steps. It had the steps that come up from two sides, one from the kitchen and one from the entryway, and then you went up, and it came together and then you went up. Then there was, I don't know, four bedrooms upstairs and a bathroom, and they were pretty big bedrooms. Then just in this one, the master bedroom actually had a door to go out, they had a porch up on top of there.

Then it actually had a fifth bedroom on third floor. Third floor wasn't finished except for that one bedroom, and I had a couple sisters that slept up there. That'd run up the cold in the wintertime, but once they got in the room, it was heated, but the rest of it was cold. Big old barn house. It was, I don't know. I remember my mom and dad had it stucco'd and of course it was like a recession time or whatever so the guy gave him a real good price on it.

He was out there throwing stucco on the side of that building. It was November, probably about 40 degrees or so, he's in a short sleeve shirt, and up on the third floor, and this chief inspector came—plaster inspector came to look, and he says, "What kind of crazy guy is up there doing?" It was Rod Pierre was the guy's name. That's how. It was a stucco house, still is stucco, I went by there not too long ago. Big front porch on the front and I had to walk out like a deck on the second floor on that bump out for the kitchen and big house, lots of kids. Had a one car garage that never really got used because it was just too small and usually full of junk.

CS: Next I would like to learn about the values shared by your family and your neighbors. Values are principles or standards that help guide behavior. What memories come to mind that demonstrate what these values were for your family and your neighbors?

FF: Well, pretty much everybody with you better treat everybody right. We grew up Catholic

and they told you the way the people were going to act. You don't look down your nose at anybody and that value was—I know my dad one time, and this is when we lived on Dayton, this is a story. The neighbor next door, he was another one of the grumpy old ones, but he wasn't as bad as Mr. Hanky, but he was—

I did something, and the guy hollered at me, and I didn't do nothing. I went back home, and my dad came out and said, "You apologize." If you did something wrong, you were required to make good on that. That's the way we grew up. Just be good to people, be good to—don't look down your nose at anybody. You don't walk in their shoes, so you don't make any choices for 'em, kind of where it's at. That's the neighborhood. The whole neighborhood was like that.

CS: Now, I'm going to ask you all about leisure time. Describe some of the ways in which you, your family, and your neighbors engaged in leisure time when you were growing up.

FF: Well, like I said, we went on vacation every year or even sometimes, a Memorial Day or Labor Day, my dad would get a cabin or something and we'd always go there. My dad loved to fish, and he had all my uncles and friends or whatever, they had a fishing club, so they always went—they'd get a weekend about three, four times a year or whatever, take off, go fishing for the weekend or whatever.

Sports was always the thing when we were kids. You'd go play baseball and then you'd come home, and you play step ball and then you'd go over to the park and play wiffle ball in the streets, and then you had football, you'd be throwing football. All depends on what season is. That garage I was talking about that had a basketball net out in the back, so kids in the neighborhood would all come over and shoot baskets and play pick me up games and stuff. I don't know if you know what step ball is with the tennis ball, but that was always big in the summertime, you'd be out there. It was always sports and you're always outside, you're always doing something.

About every week, they'd have a game of chase in that neighborhood. There was 150 kids coming into that neighborhood from all the different neighborhoods, and they'd start out one guy would be it, and then you had to go find everybody else. It was on usually a Friday or Saturday night, it was kids running everywhere, hiding. There'd be 150 kids playing this game. Like I said, you were always running. If you had a bike, you were on that going down to the ball fields or somewhere. That was pretty much leisure time, it was sports.

My dad had almost—until he had that kidney disease, he had almost a perfect memory so he could raise stats and everything and just loved baseball. He loved other sports too, but baseball was his thing. He could coach his stats from 1945. That's how he actually met my grandfather. Before he met my mother, they'd stop at the bar and way home from work, and my grandfather was a great gambler, my father had a perfect memory, so they never had to pay for drinks all night long.

My dad said they'd get off the bus or get off the streetcar, I guess back then, and he'd meet my grandpa. He says, "Hey, you got starting fees?" They only needed whatever quarter for a beer, couple beers. They'd go in there, drink all they wanted, 'cause my grandfather would bet, my father would know the answer before they started it also. That's baseball. My dad was—he was

heavy into all the sports, but he was into baseball and that's—they had a Harmon Killebrew, he'd call him the big lump, and Bob Allison was the little lump 'cause he'd strike out when the bases loaded or something. [Mighty Casey's] struck out.

Pretty much, that's what we did. You weren't in church, or you weren't in school, you were playing sports. St. Mark's had a lot of organized sports. They had baseball, basketball, football. Matter of fact, they won the city championship. We won the Twin City championship when I was in eighth grade. They had really good sports, and CAA conference. We used to play all these kids from Nativity or St. Agnes or St. Bernard's or St. Luke's. They had a pretty good rivalry between the neighborhoods.

When you got to eighth grade and everybody got together 'cause they all went school together, except for the St. Thomas kids, were the rich kids, and we went to Cretin, we were the middle-class kids. That's it, we were pretty much with sports all the time or games, sport style games, like they chase, and they run all over. We had kids all over that neighborhood, everywhere. Better stay out of Mr. Hanky's, and all that. That would not be a good place to get caught.

CS: Can you recall if your family ever took vacations and if so, to where?

FF: Oh yeah. Fox Lake, that was my mom's favorite. We were up there one or two weeks every year until they closed that one, and then Lake Mitchell, we went all the time. We went pretty much up to the lake, handled all the kids and put 'em in a cabin. It's old-style cabin with the outhouse and they had a pump, they had to go pump the well water for water. Nothing modern, taking a shower was outside. You better go hop in the lake.

Then fishing all the time. Always fishing and swimming. That was our vacations pretty much.

When I was really young at one time, we went on a gun flint trail. I remember that but I was like four years old. That's one of my first memories is the riding in the car. Had a big old 56 Buick, huge thing. It was my dad's favorite car. We went on a vacation. Nothing out of state so much, just more like resorts and stuff.

CS: Which bands or music genres were your favorite?

FF: Mine, rock and roll man. Still are. We used to start out with KGWB, which was top 40s, and then of course when you get a little older, we went into KQ, and they were a little more—until about in the middle of the '70s, when you went to disco, that didn't work, so I they went to Country Western then a little bit 'cause Country Western was coming pretty big then. Of course, I grew up with the great bands. The Beatles started out and then you had the Led Zeppelin, the Stones, a lot of good, good bands. That was pretty much what we listened to. Mom and dad were more back in the '40s and stuff, but kids were all into either—I started out like top 40 in the '60s and the '70s and then when KQ was a little heavier music. Pretty much that's it.

CS: Growing up Catholic, how did your parents feel about the rock and roll music that the kids were into?

FF: Well, I think my dad made more fun of it anyway. When The Beatles came on, he always had his hair slick back, back in the '40s. When The Beatles came on, he combed it all forward and he started doing a gig in front of the TV, kind of a joke. I think my mom definitely appreciated it. My dad was a little more into old type music, but they didn't say you couldn't

listen to it or anything like that. They weren't out breaking records, like rock and roll's got to go or anything like that. Pretty much let you do what you want to do, just as long as it's—my father had a little bit of the old fashioned, my sisters were going to school, the skirts will be below the knee, and that kind of thing, and no cussing or swearing or any of that, of course he did. That's only when he got mad. That was never issue, I don't think.

CS: Next, let's discuss your experience with schooling. Please describe what it was like going to school as a child.

FF: We had classrooms of 30, 35 kids and they were run mostly by nuns. Pretty good education, pretty strict, we didn't mess around. They had old sister Carolyn; she was the principal at St. Mark's. If you ended up in her office, you'd have a note to your home and that would be the end of that nonsense, that kind of that thing. It was funny 'cause my uncle Mickey died and my Aunt Colleen taught at the school. That was another thing, you couldn't screw around too much 'cause my aunt was the seventh-grade teacher. If you screwed up big time, it'd probably been home to my mom before I got home from school.

Anyway, my uncle died and that was her brother, and this was years later. We were all sitting in the pew at the cathedral, and my sister turns around and we look, and it was Sister Carolyn whose nickname was the con, from the convent or whatever. When you were with her, you were in a convent. My sister turned around to me and I looked at her and she's, "It's the con," she was still lying. It was strict. It wasn't super strict, but they kept control of everything, and you were required to learn, and you were required to do the assignments. My father's thing was if you came home with a note from school and you said you didn't do anything, he said, "Well that just made up for the time you got away with it." You were going to get punished one way or the other 'cause you got caught this time. Even if you didn't do it, they wouldn't give you for this one if you didn't do something else.

Your teachers had the support of your parents too. The parents, none of them were in the school telling us how evil this is, like today. If the nun said you did something wrong, then you did something wrong, that's it, there was no questioning, just that. Good education, they taught you pretty well, discipline. I went to high school, now you're talking real discipline. That was military school of Cretin. They had four sergeants and the lieutenant colonel there, and the Sergeant Major Stewart, he just hollered just because he wanted to hear himself holler. If you got sent up to the office, they had a brother Lawrence, that guy was, now here was a guy who had—he came in there and they made him a fire teacher. This guy was 6 foot 6, probably about 280, and he stuttered. He stuttered terribly when he first got there.

It's really hard to listen to somebody stutter, but the reason he stuttered is 'cause when he was a kid, they picked on him, and they picked on him so much he didn't have any self-confidence. That was his thing, the self-confidence and picking on the small guy. Well, here we are, a bunch of sports guys or whatever, if you picked on a small guy and he caught you, you were dead meat. I seen him pick 150-pound kid off the ground with one hand and slam him into the bleacher and say, "What do you think you're doing?" He didn't stutter then. That's where I grew up, you do what you're told, and then they'd wrap you, they'd knock you in the back of the head if you

screwed up.

I think in the public schools they couldn't do that, but back then in the Catholic schools they could, so it was—a lot of those guys had seen some pretty good service time too. A lot of them seemed—they'd have some pretty good stories to tell, but some of 'em you didn't want to hear, but the military part of it was—and he dressed in a military uniform every day, and had to shine your shoes and all that other stuff. That discipline was. Mr. Taka was dean of students, and he didn't mess with him. Literally there was an eight-foot aisle outside of his office and I saw Billy Ferris come out of that office and not hit the ground until he hit the lockers on the other side of the thing. Then the statement was made, don't come back until you can tell me the truth. He stole a book or something, I think. I literally saw that; they didn't mess around. Here's a good one; you know who Paul Molitor is, right?

CS: No.

FF: You are not a baseball fan then, are you?

CS: No, not much.

FF: Paul Molitor was a—he was Minnesota twin, he was a coach, but he was also a hall of famer, and I went to school with him, and I used to play baseball with him and stuff. We had a Mr. Taco—not Taco, it'll come to me. Anyway, he was a northwest golden glove champ, and then he went into Marine Corps, and he was a math teacher, great math teacher, he was also the basketball coach, and he won quite a few state tournament titles, 'cause back then you had the independent state, you had independent state, and then you had the public schools, [Leona Lize 00:45:10] was his name, [Mr. Horizon 00:45:12]. Anyway, we're in taking a class one time, we're taking a test, this is in my second year, sophomore year, it was a math test, and we're taking this test and it all totally quiet in the room, and Horizon is sitting up in the front there and this kid comes down the hallway.

He says, "Hi, Len." Well, we didn't call him Len, that was Mr. Len. He had this crew cut, and 'em ears went up, he looked like a pit bull boom, and he hollers at—he says, "Molitor, get that kid." He went out the back door, and got that kid, and went back. Now it's getting really quiet, we were taking a test before, but now it's getting really quiet. Horizon goes walking out in the hallway and now it's really quiet, and he says, "You called me Len." "Yeah, I did." You could hear bang in the locker, slam. He says, "You don't call me Len. Only my friends called me Len and you ain't one of them. Now get the hell where you're supposed to be."

Now it's really quiet, but there's smiles on everybody's face in the room. He comes walking back in the room, he says, "That kid made a boo-boo." That was the end of that. That's kind of respect they demanded. They didn't, it wasn't—you could hear him slap that kid and that kid hit the lockers. He was so quick, like I said, he was a Northwest Golden Gloves champ and a Marine Corps boxer on the sides, so you didn't want to mess—that was one guy you didn't want to mess with, him and brother Lawrence. I was quite disciplined. Lot of physical discipline.

If you didn't—Horizon had a thing, if you came late to chat, you'd have to put your fingers on the wall on a chalkboard, draw two circles on the chalkboard, put your one finger on each one, then you had to move your feet out. All your weight was on those two fingers, and he let you sit there

for about five minutes or sit in a chair that wasn't there. You ever done that? You sit in with your back up against the wall, he'd make kids do that for 5, 10 minutes. Little physical discipline, he says, "That'll help him remember next time, he won't show up late for class." He was a great teacher too, really good guy. If we didn't screw with him, he was topnotch. One of his son Mike was in our class too. He was pretty good. That's kind of discipline where you didn't mess around. You didn't mess around those guys. There might be a few of you that could get away with some stuff, but not those guys. It was pretty impressive actually.

CS: What was the name of the military school you went to again?

FF: Cretin. It's Cretin-Derham Hall now, but it was Cretin back then. Cretin was on one side of the field and Derham Hall was on the other, and there was all boys school, all-girls school. Then I think two years after I graduated, they combined them. I think it's '76 or '77 they combined both schools and then it built onto the Cretin campus and stuff now, so it's pretty big. Pretty big. I think they got 1,000 kids in there or something like that now in high school.

CS: For a final topic, I'm going to ask you to reflect on local and global issues such as war, poverty, discrimination, social unrest, et cetera. In your opinion, what were some of the biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

FF: Well, the Vietnam War, of course, that tore this nation up. My dad was all pro war 'cause he'd been in Second World War in that, until, and this changed a lot of things, until they shot those kids at Kent State, and that's when he said, "Nope, that's too far. We can't have the government shooting people for protesting. We can't. We got to get out of there. If it's going to cause that, we need to get out of Vietnam." Being at Catholic school and then they got all those good St Joseph nuns over there, you had a lot of equal rights stuff impressed in your head that you don't—you treat people with respect no matter what color they're.

There was a lot of those nuns were—which would be considered liberal, but we were just right. Taking care of people that was the right thing to do, and not discrimination. We were taught that from day one and being, like you say Catholic, you were—of course they were all anti-abortion and all that stuff. Of course, at that time, most of that time, it was illegal to have abortion, but that was always a big topic. Kind of funny, 50 years later, we're still doing the same thing.

They had a lot of riots like on the University of Minnesota campus against the war, and my dad was always mad at the equal rights stuff, and this was his way and his being, he grew up Central High School. He grew up with the blacks, he was poor to begin with. His father died in 1926 when he was 6 weeks old, so he was on the end of the economic scale for most of his life. He used to hang around with the blacks and he didn't have—Saint Paul didn't have as much racial tension as any others. They used to have a black neighborhood that was middle class, but the white people could go into there and they had black bars and restaurants and nightclubs, and everybody hung out together.

This was in the '40s and stuff. It was against—it's the way it's supposed to have been. There wasn't really segregation in Saint Paul. Somebody might come out and say, "Oh yeah, there was," but not while my dad—but he got mad when the equal rights stuff started coming up because he said it was personal to him that he never did anything. He used to work with the

blacks, he worked on the railroad before the war and stuff, and he was friendly with them, so he was taken aback that they were complaining about the way he treated them. It wasn't the way he was treating them, it was the way all the other.

He was just mad 'cause that's not the way I treat you, why are you mad at me, type thing. I think he understood, you start looking at what they were doing in south and Chicago and all other places. You're talking terrible things in the '50s and '60s. Before that, even. Then Martin Luther King came out and things started to change and they're getting better. There's still, I was down in Iowa, and I got people down there, my wife's from down there, running into these people that are just they're out in the '50s. Wake up, everybody's got a right to life. Everybody's got a right to a job. Everybody's got—

If you start with the fact with somebody, they all want the same thing. They want a good school for their kids, they want a safe house to live in, they maybe even want a car, a way to get around. Everybody wants the same thing. Just start with that instead of, "Oh, you're black, I'm going to get you," or "You're Mexican," or whatever. I have black relatives and my son-in-law's Latino. Sometimes I don't understand what's wrong with you people. Why is racism a thing even? That still was a major thing back in the '60s and '70s.

Of course, of course they had political uprising, and they had all the—they killed John Kennedy, that was a major thing, and they killed Martin Luther King and then they killed Bobby Kennedy. Those were all progressive moving people. I think this country would've been a lot better off if all three of 'em still be around or had got a natural life outta the situation. The Vietnam War was a biggie that would tore up a lot people, it split people and like I said, after that Kent State shooting when they killed, what, three kids there, that turned everybody against the war, that took a big thing. It's like, we can't be shooting kids on the street. We can't have the military shooting protestors. That's not going to work. That's going to be too much. That was too much for people right there.

Of course, you had the hippie generation too that was free love and all that stuff, and of course the old people didn't understand anything about that. That was all going on. Of course, we had the world's greatest music back then too, no doubt about it. It's Crosby, Stills and Nash, that's still what I listen to, it's all music from '60s and '70s, early '70s. Still same music, still good stuff, best music. Had a picture on Facebook the other day, they had these four chicks with bell bottom jeans and stuff. The caption was, "Hey guys, this is what your grandmothers looked like back in '70s." It was pretty, pretty interesting. It was a tough time. Growing up, there was a lot of major issues that hit this country that split it right down the middle. I know some of those didn't never really get solved, so hopefully we can do that, your generation, maybe. Maybe they'll throw it on your lap, right?

CS: That seems to be how it goes.

FF: Well, that's the way it is. You look at this stuff from going back to the Civil War, and then you get reconstruction and then you got the KKK, and you got KKK marching in the '20s, Washington DC, now they wanna do it again. I'm a liberal minded person and what's going on now is contrary, just maybe where it was the left in the '60s and '70s, now it's the right in 2020

and this time anyway. Country's still tore up. It's not good. It's not good at all. There's enough here for everybody. There's enough money, there's enough jobs, there's enough everything. Of course, you got global warming to solve, and we can do that, it's not that hard.

Back in the '70s, we had Jimmy Carter who was in office, and he was going—'cause they had a oil crisis back then too, which was a lot worse than what it is now, but he started out, he had a \$2,000 tax credit if you added solar to your houses and stuff. Like my uncle Jerry, my cousin Eddie, went down to Arizona State and got a degree in solar basically, and he came back and put a—my uncle bought a solar collector for his hot water heater, but this back in the '70s. I remember being over there, my uncle Mickey came over and helped plum it in.

When they sold that house not too long ago, that still was working. Then when Reagan got in office, all that went away. They cut that up and then we went back to the oil companies. Kind of sounds familiar, doesn't it? Isn't that what you're trying to do now? It's like, I'm always thinking, if you would've taken that extra 40 or 50 years of technology and put the money into it, where would we be though? We wouldn't be worried about global warming, but we'd be worried about global cooling or something, 'cause it's there, the ideas are there. Country's got to understand that we can change this stuff. We can change all this stuff.

You got electric cars now. If you could put 50 percent of the cars out there on electric, well, there goes your price of gas down to about a buck and a half a gallon. There's new technologies, I talked to a guy last week and his job is installing electronic stuff for car charger units, and he's telling me, he says in Europe, and I can't remember the name of the car, but he says they use a 300-kilowatt hour charger, it'll fully charge that battery in 7 minutes and you're good for 700 miles. I thought, "Yeah, that's what we need right there." If you could charge your car in 7 minutes—I can't remember what the name was, but he says that's where we're going with this stuff.

Cheers to technology. If you would've put the money in the technology in 1970s, and '80s, instead of giving tax cuts to the rich, I hate to put it that way, being a liberal, but tax cuts are rich, you wouldn't had global warming now, this would all been figured out already. It's just like, don't tell me that stuff can't be done because when they wanted an atom bomb, they put thousands and thousands of people to work to build it and figure it out, it got done.

You wanna put a guy in the moon, spend the money, and there's a guy in the moon. Then society gained so much from that for all the products that came out of that. I don't know, to me it's why some of the things that this country's shortsighted in, everybody wants to drive your car. Well, you know what, if you driving electric car back and forth to work and you're saving the planet, what's wrong with that? Come on, you young guys, tell me, what's wrong with that? Go to work and you plug your car in and you're driving home. My stepson's wife has got a Chevy Volt and they get about 30 miles out of that before it's a—what do you call it? You can charge it up, but then the engine kicks in too.

CS: Oh, the hybrids.

FF: Hybrid, yep. She drives 17 miles to work so she can go to work and back, it doesn't cost any gas. Make it run around, plug it in, and then they're plugging it in into 110. It's not a major thing,

but if you get 30 miles, if you get—people don't make more than 30-mile trips. I used to work in construction 60 miles, but even still, if I got 30 miles for free, I'd have done that every day for the price of electric. That's what, I don't know, that's things that just haven't gotten solved. That's political will, I guess to do it. You guys got to pick up the ball, man. You young guys pick up the ball and get this stuff done. Don't let the oil companies buy out. That's what I'm looking at. Get a congress that's the best money—best Congress money can buy for whoever's got the money.

CS: This is the end of our interview. Your responses are valuable, and we really appreciate that you took the time to do this today. Thank you so much for participating.