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Marianne Carus

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Oral History Interview with Marianne Carus,
March 1st, 2016
Conducted by Meg Miner, Illinois Wesleyan Archivist

Meg Miner: This is an interview with Marianne Carus that took place on March 1st, 2016.

Marianne Carus: Hello?

Miner: Hello, is this Marianne?

Carus: Yes.

Miner: Marianne, this is Meg Miner calling for the Illinois Wesleyan project on Minor Myers.

Carus: Oh yes, I- this is such an inconvenient-

Miner: Okay.

Carus: I have to go in a minute. There isn't much I can say about mi-mi-Minor-

Miner: Okay.

Carus: -because I- I only met him once. I was invited to dinner together with my husband and he was a wonderful guy and I really enjoyed his company. He loved my magazines and we discussed those- the *Cricket* magazine, and you know also he insisted that I see his new addition to the university, and we spent about an hour on that. I want- I needed to go back home to finish some work for the magazines- but he was such a wonderful man that I stayed as long as he wanted me to.

Miner: Well, was the library-

Carus: He thought about- yes, the library. And he showed me the...on his computer what they all- all said about me, every little detail. And he wanted me to see that, so that was very nice of him. I mean he was just so great, and he was so many sided. I mean, he was interested in so many things we loved also and I looked forward to seeing him often. But very shortly after that he was diagnosed with lung cancer and then we never saw him again.

Miner: Oh dear. Well-

Carus: Oh, one more thing.

Miner: Yes.

Carus: He had a violin I think hanging in his house. I think it was a violin. But he- he played several instruments I think. And I used to play the violin myself so this was another thing we talked about-

Miner: Hmm.

Carus: -playing the violin and how much we enjoyed music.

Miner: Oh wonderful! Well, did you- on the tour you took with him of the library, did he ever talk to you about sort of his ideas for a library, sort of his philosophy of libraries was?

Carus: No, I think we didn't because we were in a rush.

Miner: Sure.

Carus: Because he wanted me to see as much as possible of the building. [Miner laughs] And I told him I had to go right after dinner and he said he wanted me to see this.

Miner: Okay.

Carus: And he was very convincing so I stayed. [Miner laughs] And no, he didn't talk much about- they both talked about how important libraries are for kids-

Miner: Yeah.

Carus: -and good librarians.

Miner: Yeah. Oh, well, that's good to hear! [laughs]

Carus: Because the librarians still read children's books, I mean they still do of course, but at the time a lot of teachers did not read books and- and not the books that they had for children. They were just sitting in their classrooms.

Miner: Hmm.

Carus: But he- he was different, was very interested in children and what they were reading.

Miner: Well-

Carus: That's also why he liked the magazines. Yeah, we had many people actually who loved children's books and read children's books as grown-ups and that's the kind of books children love are the ones that their parents love too.

Miner: Well, that's so true, yep.

Carus: Because every book has to be interesting to everybody if it interests a child. But people don't really understand that, a lot of them don't.

Miner: You think the book culture has- is gone beyond that now?

Carus: It's getting better because I think there is an interest in the schools that teachers read more books for children and introduce their children to the good books.

Miner: Well, I know the-

Carus: I have the feeling that I'm wrong.

Miner: Oh no, I-

Carus: Because I'm not- I'm not in that field anymore. I'm retired.

Miner: Sure.

Carus: But I'm still sort of working on having ideas for people who are running *Cricket* now. The- the magazines are still continuing.

Miner: Yes.

Carus: They are going on, which is really nice. I'm very happy about that.

Miner: It's a great legacy.

Carus: Mm-hmm.

Miner: Well, thank you so much, I really appreciate-

Carus: So if you have any other questions, don't hesitate to call me again, I just have to go now.

Miner: Of course, thank you for your time. You have a good day.

Carus: You're very welcome.