

Transcript – Class of 1963 50th Reunion

Narrators: Nancy Scull, Linda Brody Lyons, Jean Dowdall, Judy Neal Murray, Martha Macaulay Anderson, Barbara Langworthy, Elaine Piller Congress, Carol Spindler Duncan, Jennifer Williams Ketay Brock, and Judy Blockman Bernstein

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Wendy Korwin: It's Saturday, May 25, 2013, just after 11:00 a.m. This is Wendy Korwin, I am the Pembroke Center's archivist, and I am here today talking to members of the class of 1963. I'd like to start by asking each of the women who are here to introduce themselves.

Nancy Scull: Hi, I'm Nancy Scull.

WK: Concentration?

NS: A little bit about what I do?

WK: Concentration and where you went.

NS: Oh, I'm sorry. I majored in economics at Brown, having started out in applied math and decided that was not really what I wanted to do. And had a 30-year career in the computer industry. And as a retirement thing, I've started a nonprofit, raising money for education in Tanzania, which I'm doing passionately today.

Linda Brody Lyons: Okay. I'm Linda Brody Lyons. I majored in biology here, and I worked in that field, but I had the opportunity [00:01:00] to move to architectural history and historic preservation, and that's what I do now.

Jean Dowdall: I'm Jean Dowdall. I majored in anthropology. I was in higher ed. all my career. I was a faculty member for many years, and an administrator. And about 18 years ago, I became

a search consultant also in higher education, so I go around the country, looking for presidents and deans and so on for colleges and universities, and hope to retire in the next year or two.

Judy Neal Murray: I'm Judy Neal Murray, and I majored in history. I currently live in Newton. I have been involved in education all my life as a teacher, and now, actually, since 1995, in art museums. So I'm currently in the education department of the Harvard Art Museums.

Martha Macaulay Anderson: I'm Marty Macaulay Anderson. I was a teacher for 25 years, most recently [00:02:00] a technology teacher. And I live just outside New York City in Rockland County.

Barbara Langworthy: I'm Barbara Langworthy. I majored in applied mathematics, went to work in the industry, doing simulations of missile radio waves, etcetera. Took a few years off to become a mother, and then finished my career as a software engineering manager in parallel processing. I am retired now, and am very active in the community of Franconia, New Hampshire, and General North Country chairings.

Elaine Piller Congress: Hello. I'm Elaine Piller Congress. And while I was at Brown, I majored in Europe and civilization. I currently – I'm associate dean and professor at Fort University Graduate School of Social Service [00:03:00] in New York City, where I've lived most of my adult life. While here, I majored in American civilization. I've done a lot of international work, and I also represent an NGO, International Federation of Social Workers at the UN. So I've become much more international over the years.

Carol Spindler Duncan: I'm Carol Spindler Duncan. I majored in international relations. I have to say that I really didn't follow that path after college, although I have traveled extensively. After school, I went into retailing. I taught, I got my master's degree, took time out for a family. And for the past 20-plus years, I've been the executive director of an organization in Lowell, Massachusetts called Girls, Inc. And I keep thinking about retiring, but I'm not sure I really want to. [laughter]

Jennifer Williams Ketay Brock: I'm Jennifer Williams Ketay Brock. I majored in French language [00:04:00] and literature. Didn't ever want to teach, so ended up in office work, both bilingual and only English for a number of years. Did teach daycare center for a couple of years. Left the job market to raise two kids. And when I went back to work, found that one of my passions in life was alumni clubs and was lucky enough to work for Brown's Alumni Relations for four and a half years, finally retiring four years ago, exactly and now, biding my time between New York and Allentown, Pennsylvania. I volunteer in the community with toddlers now, which is a great pleasure.

Judy Blockman Bernstein: I'm Judy Blockman Bernstein. I was a classics major here. I got a master's degree the year after I received my BA [00:05:00] in [theatre?] at Wellesley College. And then I taught for any number of years. I taught Latin, I taught Greek at the high school level. And then – and related courses – And then I retired. My husband and I do volunteer work. We're very privileged to be able to do that. We do that both for the general community and the Jewish community. And that's how we spend our time, and it couldn't be more pleasant. Except for our grandchild. She's more pleasant.

WK: Thank you all. So to bring things back, I want to go to the beginning. I'm very interested about what drew you to Pembroke. If you can remember having any particular expectations before you got to school here.

JW: For me, it was the fact that it was a coordinate [00:06:00] school. I had grown up in the Midwest in coeducational schools. But I wanted a fairly demanding education. My father was a professor. There was a certain expectation. And the coed schools in the Northeast seemed to be very small, and not very many of them. And I did want to go to school in the East, because we were living in the East. So Brown was an ideal setup, a women's college with coed classes with an adjacent men's school, with a good reputation. And so that's what I came expecting, and that's what I found. And one of my greatest benefits from having been here are the female friends.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

CSD: No, I was going to say [00:07:00] I still have two friends that go back to when I was 17 that I'm very close to still. But like you, the coordinate, I applied to Jackson, Radcliffe, and Pembroke. And I did not want to go to a Seven Sisters school. My violin teacher actually acquainted me with – she had a prior pupil who had actually started at UMass and was not happy, and transferred here, and was very happy. So that's what gave me the idea.

JBB: My feelings are exactly like Jennifer's except that I went to an all-women's high school. And my parents saw me at Smith or at Wellesley or something, but I did not. [laughter] So we agreed on this, because the quality here was certainly the quality of that. And it was an opportunity to be in a co-ed environment, and it was relatively small as a place, [00:08:00] not only the women's part, but also the university as a whole, undergraduate is fairly small. So –

NS: My reason's pretty similar to that, too. I started my life at private girls' schools outside Philadelphia, and we had moved to a rural environment when I was 12, just, you know, entering puberty, and had never known any boys before. And there I was, in a public school, in a rural community, with boys. Now, that was a lot of adjustment. And I don't even like going back there now. I never liked that place for that reason. Near Allentown. And so we went back to the headmistress of the previous school I'd gone to, and she suggested Brown, which I'm sure our guidance counselor had never even heard of. I had been such a big fish in a little pond at this school. I took all the top honors and everything in high school, and I wanted to be in a more challenging environment, but it was really more social. I wanted to be able to be me, and not be alienating boys. And so the idea of having [00:09:00] some separation was important.

BL: I had a very different reason for being here. I had been introduced to the campus through science programs out of high school, and had found out about the applied math major and thought, oh, that sounds really – I like math and I like physics, and here's a combination. But I had also gotten the word from, you know, my mother got it from PTO people, but they had a program on financing college education. And the feeling was that I believe colleges had more money to support students. I was brought up on welfare, so I had absolutely no means to go to an Ivy League college. But the guidance department let me know that there was something

called early admissions plan, and I figured, well, give it a go. [00:10:00] And I was admitted with full tuition scholarship, which suddenly made this wonderful education available to me. And while my goal here was the applied math program, Pembroke was such a marvelous, broadening experience that I just don't know if I could have found it anyplace else. Just very grateful to this school.

EPC: I also – I mean, I was attracted here, because I like the idea of a coordinated Pembroke-Brown. I knew that I wanted to go to a coed school, so I immediately dismissed Smith or well, you know? Wellesley. My father really wanted me to go to an Ivy League school. It seemed manage – I come from Hartford, Connecticut, so it seemed a manageable distance. I also applied early admission and was accepted. [00:11:00] And I like the idea of a school where we had a separate student government, we had a separate, you know, newspaper, separate admissions, separate gyms, separate residence halls, especially in those days. So these were things that I thought were really attractive about Pembroke. And it was a great education at Brown, and I liked being in classes with men from Brown, and graduating with Brown.

JD: I just wanted to add one other element. I remember reading the catalog, and reading about the IC courses, and thinking how wonderful they look. So there was always lots of elements in a decision like that, but that was a big part of the attraction for me.

WK: What were the IC courses?

JD: It stood for identification and criticism of ideas. And my recollection of them – which could be completely inaccurate – is that they were interdisciplinary. They were topical or thematic courses, as opposed to intro to, [00:12:00] you know, political science.

JNM: And they were seminars.

JD: And they were seminars. And I think I took one in this room, but maybe I made that up.

CSD: I think we all had to take at least one. They were smaller courses, so it wasn't sitting in big lecture halls as freshmen. It was, you know –

LBL: It was wonderful access to the faculty, yeah. Which I think was characteristic of the whole experience here.

EPC: Yeah. And certainly, I mean, some concentrations were really [inaudible]. I mean, for example, I mean, I was American civilization, so American history, American literature, philosophy, art. And so it really was kind of like an IC format.

JNM: And one of the things that was communicated to me when I was visiting Brown was that it was that sort of spirit of trying anything, that you could come and just – you didn't have to be a semipro to go out [00:13:00] for something brand new. But I can remember at the end of my freshman year, I tried. I literally took that to heart and tried out for the Chattertocks, even though I cannot sing a note, but, you know, so on and so forth. And I tried out for, you know, just about everything. And that spirit, I think, of try it, you know, if it's new, it doesn't matter, experimentation. So that was a big thing for me about Brown.

WK: I'm curious about other things that people tried that took them in unexpected directions, or opened up new interests while you were here.

NS: Well, I wouldn't say this was a new interest, but I've always been interested anything international. And so I had an opportunity to go to Germany on a work exchange program after my junior year, which required speaking German at all times on the job. And actually, all the time, total immersion. And, you know, although I passed my proficiency exam, [00:14:00] actually turning that into being a conversationalist is a whole different ballgame. And, you know, I think that was probably the most important experience in my four years here, in terms of shaping my future life.

MMA: I think the course that was a very different direction for me, that really broadened my life, was architectural history. Does anybody remember that course? It was wonderful. And not only

did it give you an appreciation, you know, starting off with all the buildings on the East Side here, but it really brought my whole interest in art that I had never had before there. And, you know, been fortunate to go to museums around the world. And very often, I hark back, like in Florence, when you're at the Palazzo Vecchio, and I can remember the slides from that architecture [00:15:00] history course. And it was just such a wonderful course that, you know, I can remember it all today.

LBL: Well, I will only go to say that I was, of course, a science major, but I sort of had a spare hour between courses in the morning, and I encountered someone I knew and said, "Let's have some coffee." And I said, "Well, I have to go to this art class." And I thought, oh. [laughter] I sat in on it, and I liked it. And we could, of course, well, audit, or even vagabond classes. And I just sort of started working my way through the art department, and I did adore the architectural history. And it was an eye opener, too, and particularly Professor Jordy was very inspirational. So it was a wonderful opportunity.

EPC: Well, I always liked to write, and really, [Brad Zimmer?] gave me the opportunity, [00:16:00] so I became very involved in writing for the *Pembroke Record*, and ultimately, I was managing editor. And I love writing news stories and reviewing movies, you know? Foreign movies. And I had a great experience. And also, I think that's one thing that was possible at Pembroke. I don't know from the *Brown Daily Herald*, like, what role women – you know, especially that point, you know, like, would have had. I don't know if anyone way – I don't think any women were allowed to – But I think it was fun. In fact, at one point I thought I would become a reporter, but then I took a different path. But I really loved my work at the *Pembroke Record*.

CSD: Did you review all the Bergman movies?

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EPC: (inaudible) about love and life and sex, when it was really – you know, I'm eighteen or nineteen. But here have, and all those movies. [00:17:00]

JBB: You need to understand them so that you could review those movies.

EPC: (inaudible) Oh, by the way. I was involved – let me just mention, I was involved in a project to digitize the *Pembroke Record*. And if you're interested to see what you were talking about doing, you know, in 1959 to 1962, just, you know, Google it. And also, let me just tell you, so I was thinking Congress and it didn't come up at all. And I said, what's happened? I mean, I wrote – and then I realize, you know, Google your maiden name. (laughs)

JNM: And just look at the ads in the paper. There's [Toy Sons?], and like (inaudible). One of the benefits of the coordinated arrangement is that the extracurricular activities like Brown Brokers, which was both the Pembroke-Brown theater production, musical production, was just incredible, because again, it was something I'd never tried out before, but [00:18:00] encouraged to do this. And with Jim Barnhill and the Brown theater group, which is incredible. I mean, I know Yale has its, you know, reputation, so does Harvard. But Brown has a tremendous theater. And that was another thing that I think was available to us through this kind of arrangement. It was great.

LBL: Could I just say about the Bergman movies – which yes, we all went and see them – so often a campus discussion, public campus discussion, came out of the latest Bergman movie, with professors, I mean expert professors coming together for a discussion group. And I felt that that was one of the wonderful things about the experience here, is again, the faculty was so out there for us.

CSD: When I graduated, I thought I would never see another Bergman movie. [laughter] I've been ready to read these (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Some of them, yes. And maybe understand them. And last summer, [00:19:00] [Miriam down?]. (inaudible) understand it any better now than (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JW: Bergman movies got a lot easier to take as time went on. (laughter) Actually understand.

WK: I'm glad you brought that up, because I actually did look you up in the Pembroke Record, and I saw that you had also covered a series of talks that was given by an invited Harvard professor. The very first one was about sexuality and personal freedom. And I was surprised. I remember –

MMA: Whoa! Did we go?

WK: Oh, you reported –

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

MMA: I don't remember that one.

F: – changed our lives.

WK: But I wanted to know how discussions of sexuality and personal freedom went on at Pembroke.

JNM: Well, a lot of discussion around personal freedom was having off-campus parties and the parietal rules. Which were, you know, when you think about it, you're looking back to [00:20:00] the Victorian Age practically, so – And it was pretty stiff. You had to be in by a certain time, and you were checked in and all that kind of thing. And at one point, you could have only so many off campus kinds of things. So I think personal freedom really was taken personally in terms of kind of what we saw as our limitations at that point.

JW: And some of us were more interested in pushing the barriers than others. I was very compliant. I never did anything wrong. But I felt for those who came in over the fence and through the windows, and kind of managed, you know –

EPC: I remember when I first came here we could stay out to 10 o'clock on a weeknight. I mean, I thought that was so much freedom, because in my house growing up, I had to be – you

know, like, after dinner, you'd, like, stayed at home, you know, during the week. So then I thought all the New York – I wasn't a New Yorker then, you know, felt these rules were [00:21:00] so oppressive. And I also was pretty rule compliant. But one time, I remember, I was in Friday night, we could stay up until 1:00, but I thought it would be 1:00 on Saturday. Guess what? It was 12:30, so I was late. I can remember the punishment. Was anyone else in this room bad and was ever late? There was, like, a tribunal.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JNM: Was this freshman year?

EPC: Possibly.

JNM: I was your roommate. [laughter] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EPC: – how upset I was, really, because I didn't do it on purpose. I thought it was the same rules from Friday applied for Saturday.

JNM: I did the same thing. My home was in Warwick, and so I just thought I could go home for the weekend, what the hey, you know? Just, my family picked me up, I went home. I never signed out or anything like that. And then I got, like, oops. [00:22:00] You know, it was like, well, this is my own backyard, practically. So yeah, it was coming into line, and sort of seeing that. You know, there were a set of rules in place that – and I think – and they affected the women more than the men, for sure. And do you remember the ones that we were allowed to have, men in the rooms? Was it three feet on the floor?

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

F: And the door open.

NS: And only on certain Sunday afternoons (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Very limited. Like three times a year or something.

MMA: Which is why I think it's so extraordinary that the world changed, two years after we left. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Everything was turned upside down.

EPC: My sister started at Pembroke in September of 1963. She could wear pants to dinner. Remember when we had to wear skirts? And just, that summer, and that was, like, the beginning of the new – [00:23:00]

MMA: I feel it shifted very rapidly.

JNM: Oh, it did.

JBB: – that that's the thing that probably annoys all of us in the room the most. But not only the tightest of the social requirements, but the fact that after we left, and after 1969, you could just choose to do anything. You could do things pass fail. And since I had covered so much of academic whatever in order to get in here in the first place, the fact that I had to take things I cared not a whit about, it really was annoying. And I really feel that right to this day, there was a change, and we were just before it. And I really wanted to be here just after it.

JNM: You know, if you think about when we entered, we entered in '59, Eisenhower was president. We graduated in '63, and a few months later, Kennedy is assassinated. So I mean, in this period of time, [00:24:00] the Berkeley revolution occurred just, you know, like the December after that.

F: It was really a time of turmoil. It really is.

JNM: Generations shrank from being, like, 20 years apart, to – I mean, every five years, it was, like, a new generation. And as you say, in the same family, there's, like, you know, you're talking across the gap.

NS: The first riot on campus was the spring of our senior year.

JNM: Was that mashed potatoes? When the mashed potatoes?

NS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And the Rat Factory. [laughter] Everybody's forgotten that the refectory was called the Rat Factory. No, but I mean, it's disappeared, the younger generations don't understand that –

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

LBL: But I don't remember the revolution.

JNM: Yes, the mashed potatoes. They had a potato fight.

NS: It started – they were throwing mashed potatoes in the refectory at dinner. I happened to be at the John Hay studying, because it was finals time, too. It was a lovely, warm, spring night. You know, heavy air, it was beautiful. And all of the sudden, these people arrived at the library, and the police were on their heels, and then Keeney arrived, and we were all [00:25:00] escorted out of the library, we couldn't take any of our stuff. It was all in the library. We were trying to study for finals. This is my own personal situation, I'm sure everyone has a different story to tell.

LBL: Well, wait, there were mashed potatoes in the library? [laughter]

NS: No, no. But it was part, and then they went over to the Pembroke campus and continued rioting.

JD: Did it have any larger social purpose, or it's just about letting off steam?

NS: Well, I think ultimately, it was letting off steam, but that was the first time that it happened. And then it was starting at Harvard at the same time, and just sort of picked up steam from there. But it was kind of the beginning of what became, you know, riots for, you know, civil rights and then for Vietnam. I mean, it all grew out of there is my – Judy’s the historian, so you –

JD: Well, I remember that as a panty raid, so I (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). You know, everybody from Pembroke was, you know, everyone from Pembroke was, you know, told, “You do not” (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). There were girls starting at RISD throwing their whole drawer of underwear out to these guys. [laughter]

JNM: Wait a minute, I saw (inaudible).

BL: Oh, you saw it, so now you’re – Okay.

JNM: [00:26:00] But that was a big decision that Keeney had to make, whether to let the police on campus, remember that? (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) students were sort of running, you know, off –

NS: And whether to bring the dogs, too, because that was a big one.

JNM: And there was, in the *Pembroke Record* or the *Brown Daily Herald*, there’s actually headline that said “The only casualty was a policeman got bitten in a case of mistaken identity by his own dog.” [laughter] So that was the big casualty.

LBL: I must have been studying in my room that night. [laughter]

CSD: Well, I’ve mentioned this to Stephanie before, and I don’t know if you remember it, but Brooke Kruger, who was one of our classmates, I remember her getting up and giving a speech, I don’t know what he was – right at the end of our senior year, it was in Andrews Dining Hall, and I remember she said, “We are the last of the straight arrows.” And I said to her so many times

since, how did you know that? That was so prophetic. But she was right. [00:27:00] Absolutely right.

F: She was right.

NS: Well, and actually, that was my reaction when you said you didn't expect everyone who accepted this invitation to show up, and I thought, I can't imagine not showing up when you said you're going to go. You go, you know? I didn't even question it.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JBB: (inaudible) about us. We do what we are supposed to do.

WK: I'll plan differently for next year.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

BL: – should have asked for the white gloves.

NS: Next year's class was on the cusp of change, so they might view it differently.

WK: Oh, that's right. Yeah.

JD: I think it's interesting, or maybe you don't see it this way, that there was an intellectual level, an academic level, there was continuity. So the experiences that we talked about earlier, I think are not that different from what people would talk about today, but the social transformation was enormous. So in some ways, it feels like we went to a different institution, from what is here today. And in other ways, it feels just the same.

MMA: That's a good analogy.

JW: But, Jean, how about the fact that [00:28:00] intellectually and educationally, women from the '70s on, had a whole different set of expectations professionally?

JD: Of what they would do with it. Understood. Agree. Yeah.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EPC: And how many of us were teachers? You said you weren't.

CSD: I was for two years. Yeah, two years.

EPC: But I bet most of us –

NS: No, I didn't have high intellectual expectations at all. I didn't have any idea what I wanted to do, and, you know, I was good at math, and so applied math sounded good, and that's why I got in, was because – that was all serendipitous. But I really came here to get my MRS, and I completely failed. I'm probably the only person in the room who has totally failed at that. So – so what I really liked was the ratio of three men to every woman. That was important.

JNM: I found that, looking back, if I had to say I regretted anything about sort of this period of when we graduated and all that, was that we [00:29:00] really didn't get a whole sense of what next? I mean, there was no real – I never felt that we were, you know, talked about careers or that kind of next step. So when we said, you know, you want to go into business? That really meant, you know, bone up on your secretarial skills. If you want, you know, want to – Again, the sort of seemed the roads opened to us at that point. And you think about it, in the law schools, there are very few women. There were five women in my husband's law class, and that was in 1969.

EPC: Well, I don't think that, well, all the faculty were that encouraging of women. Because I was a very good student, you know, at Pembroke, and I was (inaudible) and Phi Beta Kappa and all. So I had really good grades, but my advisor – who will remain nameless because I know this

is being recorded – said, “I never recommend women for Ph.D. programs, because they’re not, you know, serious. You know, they get married, (inaudible).” [00:30:00] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JD: Elaine, I had the exact opposite experience. So just to know that it was varied, you know, the guy that wrote me a letter and –

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JD: I’m sorry?

EPC: It depends (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JD: It depends. Of course it does.

LBL: And I would certainly say the same for research biology. I think, you know, there wasn’t – I certainly had all the help I needed in selecting my graduate school, and I think there was no question that I would be accepted. And it was worth – in my worth doing. Yeah. [laughter]

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

BL: I wanted to go out and, you know, do a career. That was my objective at the end of three years. And my advisor instead really wanted me to go on to graduate school. And he was very upset. I think he had already picked out where I was going to go, because they did that. They parlayed for who was going to go from one school to the other. And he was probably right, [00:31:00] I probably should have stayed in for graduate school. But as I said, I was brought up on welfare, and I, at that point, had enough debts in my life, I needed to earn some money to repay them. And, you know, of course, then I met my husband, and, you know, put everything off for a while. And, but I never regretted it, you know?

NS: The economics department definitely recommended getting a Ph.D. They panned the whole notion of getting a master's degree. If you were going to apply to graduate school, it had to be for a Ph.D.

EPC: But it was interesting, my reaction, Carol said, "Well, you should have asked for another advisor." See, but that was part of the culture. You didn't. And you took – you know, this authority figure, I mean, remember? The authority that we thought the faculty and advisors had? I don't know if anyone ever stood up and, you know, objected to any kind of advisor or faculty.

JW: I think it was very self (inaudible). And let's face it, [00:32:00] we got this also from our mothers. I mean, this is the culture that we grew up in, for most of us, people did not –

JBB: I think the problem was we didn't feel enabled, all right? We really didn't feel enabled. We probably do very much now, okay? Nothing ever happens where we don't say exactly what we're thinking, exactly what we want to have happen. We protest when we feel we ought to protest. But I certainly didn't come out of this place as that person. It's really been over the course of my life that I've gotten confidence to really do –

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EPC: Oh, it gave me the confidence. And my regret is that I didn't get more involved. But I have gotten more and more involved as I've gotten older. So I think, you know, there was a recognition, at least that I – I needed sort of that time to just socialize and – but, if I could do it again I would become [00:33:00] much more involved. But I think it, you know, started the kind of long roll with that. So, (inaudible). I think it gave me the self-confidence.

EPC: Yeah. I didn't know I was that confident, you know, at the point that I grad – I certainly got a lot out of my education here. And, you know, I knew I wanted to pursue a career. And finally, I did get a doctorate, but it took me, you know, like, 20 years later, a different path. But I don't know. I mean, I think I needed more confidence over the years. Almost 50 years, in terms of my experience.

CSD: Yeah. Well, I didn't graduate and say, "Oh, I'm confident." You know, but it was the beginning of that process of –

NS: You know what I've observed over the course of my life is – and this was a really, really hard lesson for me to learn – I got spoiled here, because we could talk about [00:34:00] ideas on any topic. It didn't even matter if we knew what we were talking about. And we could shoot each other down, and nobody was offended, you know? I mean, if I didn't like Carol's idea, I could say, "Oh no, that doesn't make sense." And she'd say, "Oh," and she'd come up with something else, or I'd come up with – and it was all quite acceptable. Well, in the business world, let me tell you, especially since it's dominated by men, that is not acceptable at all. And it was very late in my career by the time I figured out that I was treading on a lot of toes by being quite open about how I felt about things. You just don't do that. That may not be true in other fields, I don't know, but it certainly was true in the corporate world.

JBB: I really missed, when I left, I really missed the company here, those little conversations we had here were always at such a high level. I wasn't really aware of it. I didn't even think about it, honestly. But we all had what were really very good intellectual conversations. And then, it isn't there so much anymore, in the world [00:35:00] outside. And I really miss that a lot. I really did.

BL: I found that when I came back to the fifth Pembroke reunion, I hadn't realized what an image I had of the way women should act. And somehow, coming back, it was like you were at home, because, you know, people were acting the way you expected them to act. And it was just a wonderful, warm feeling.

NS: Well, and in fact, I translate that to (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). As you know, I've been quite active in alumni whatever's, both in Boston and here. And whenever I meet anybody and I find out they've gone to Brown, I feel like they're my brother or sister. I mean, I really have an instant bond, and family feeling for them, regardless of the age, even.

MMA: I'm usually overwhelmed by it, by younger people who have gone to Brown. Oh, I would never have been accepted at Brown given these times. [00:36:00] But when you were talking about women in conversation, I think it probably – I wonder if all of you have actively sought a woman's support group, you know, a circle of women, because that was important here. And I think it's been important for me in my other life, too. My life beyond Brown.

EPC: It's interesting, we did have a women's kind of support group, but we didn't call it that. We didn't know it. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

MMA: But a circle of friends is what I'm talking about. Yeah. And the importance of it.

F: Yes. Very important.

JD: In fact, I would take that a step further and say that I don't think I realized until Elaine's luncheon yesterday, which was such a wonderful event, that I think I went to a women's college. If you had asked me that yesterday, two days ago, I would have said, well, no, it was a coeducational university, everybody had classes together and so on. But the reality is that my world, anyway, was a women's college world, and a relationship driven world, and then there were no men in it, [00:37:00] except as occasional dates, or whatever. But it was not integral to life. Was that other people's experience?

NS: Well, in fact, I can build on that a little further, because last night, I sat with a group of our male, call it classmates, and not any female. It was them and their spouses. And the conversation at the end of the evening, moved over and, you know, sat with my old close friends from when I was here, just light years different. They were all talking about all the bad things they did while they were here, and it sort of was – it's always sort of, you know, I did this, can you come up with a better story than that? And, you know, there was no intellectual content whatsoever to the conversation. And then I go back and talk to the women, and it's just a completely different environment.

LBL: I've noticed that at reunions. [laughter]

JD: So they were like different people from us.

NS: Yeah, I mean, they were good people, they were (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) one on one, but when they're around the table, they have a different kind of conversation. Like –

CSD: That's outside of here, too. [00:38:00] That is not unique, I think, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Men, simply, talk about a different group of subjects than we often do.

JNM: I think one of the wonderful things, though, was having, you know, men and women classes together. And if you had enough smaller, you know, seminar type courses, I really appreciated the dialogue and the dialectic that went on from, you know – And I never really, you know, feared speaking up or defending a point. I never had that feeling because I'm a woman, I shouldn't say anything.

LBL: Well, I think we had the best of both, really, the women's closeness, but also the access to a true version of the wider world.

NS: Well, you know, in the corporate world, I, you know, was always a minority female, because I was just sort of ahead of this cusp of this run on MBAs by women. And [00:39:00] I never really had come up against discrimination before, you know? I never felt like the men in our class discriminated against us or thought they were better than we were in any way. I mean, they probably had expectations that we would not –

MMA: No, I was going to say that.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JNM: We were a little smarter than they were. [laughter]

MMA: Well, yeah, there was that.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JNM: Yeah, the whole admissions process.

CSD: Well, we were a third of the size, and there was much less choice for us. So I think the competition for admission was much more difficult.

MMA: Yeah, no, I think we were a more selective group.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

LBL: I think the faculty knew it, too. [laughter]

JD: Well, I bet we came here in part because we wanted an environment where we were free to be smart. Maybe we weren't so – was it you said that earlier – Weren't so free to do that in high school.

BL: I bring it up against the discrimination when I started interviewing for a job, [00:40:00] because I was technical, the placement person at Pembroke sent me to Brown to do my interviewing. And I interviewed with Westinghouse, who has a wonderful engineering training program. And I had been a Westinghouse science talent search honor rolee in high school, and I thought, well, I should really try this. And when I went to the interview, the person is reading my resume, waves me to the seat, and then starts to salivate over everything that I have and how wonderful this is, and, you know, I'm sitting there, like, "Well, thank you very much." And he did this, "A girl. Oh, yeah, Barbara. Excuse me." Walks out of the room – and no, he didn't, he never looked at the name. He just assumed it was a him. And he came back in and said, "We don't have a ladies' [00:41:00] room in our training facility." End of interview. And I have a neighbor who graduated from MIT the same year who went to Polaroid, and he verified that they put the ladies' room in their training facility after the Civil Rights Amendment. They didn't have one either.

F: Sixty-four.

BL: In '63.

JNM: Who knew?

NS: Yeah. I took a class at the Harvard Business School, just a one-week short course, it was called a short course in marketing management. It was in the late '60s, I guess, and they had finally admitted women to the Harvard Business School. But the ladies' room was at the far end of the hall and down two flights of stairs, and it was the only one in the building.

LBL: Remember, even in the Senate and the House of Representatives, it's taken a long time to get restroom equity.

BL: Well, when you went to a technical conference you never had to stand in line. [00:42:00]
[laughter]

JNM: Could I ask the group a question? So how did everybody feel when Pembroke disappeared in – was it '71?

CSD: I was for it, mainly because I thought we would have more women admitted, which we have. I guess that was my major – and I always felt like, you know, our diplomas were from Brown. It didn't seem like a huge, huge leap to me. It really didn't.

EPC: Yeah. I mean, just knew it would happen. I mean, it was economical, to have, like, coeducation in every other school was moving toward it. So, I mean, I think I knew it would just be, like, a matter of time. And I was a little concerned about the *Pembroke Record*, you know, dying. [00:43:00] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JW: I also felt it was inevitable, because it was in the air. And I had a lot of sort of sadness about it, because of things like the *Record*, and the *Brun Mael*, which I ended up being photography editor for our senior year, which was a fantastic experience. And I knew those opportunities would disappear, because when you're competing with so many men, you're just not going to – you know, shy people are not going to try as hard. But on the other hand, a couple of years ago, I had the opportunity to talk sort of about this with a member of the class of '65, Mary Jean Green, who teaches French, I think, at Dartmouth. And her point of view – and this is only two years after we were, you know, [00:44:00] out of the school, was that we were marginalized as women on the Brown campus. So she was active at the BDH [*Brown Daily Herald*], but it was a struggle. She just went in there, and got in, and stayed there, and did very well with it. So, you know, in fact, age-wise, she's probably exactly my age. But she was very much sensing the marginalization of women on the campus and the institutions. And that's why we had to come together, because women had to have opportunities to be on the radio station, on the big yearbook, on the big newspaper. And you can't argue with that, you know, because you're not going to have women CEOs if they're sort of toddling along after the second string stuff, you know? I mean, you just have to be able to compete. [00:45:00] So here we go.

BL: Did anybody feel the other way?

JBB: It was a mixed bag. I mean, it just was a mixed bag, and you had to decide – I mean, I think there are plusses and minuses. I've never felt completely good about it. I came back to the 100th anniversary of the founding of Pembroke. I came to the 120th, because I feel that's my major attachment to this institution. But I think all the other reasons, or the reasons going forward that made very good sense, okay? I can be completely wrong, but I think the fact that it's a combined place, as opposed to an all-women's place, those are the two real options, that the attached, smaller brigade of us to the university, in the future, [00:46:00] was not going to be a positive, just couldn't be a positive, because it wasn't really coed in that sense.

MMA: How about you, Judy?

JNM: Well, you know, I feel the same way that – or I did feel when I heard about – and again, I think part of me was saying nobody consulted me. [laughter] How did this –

MMA: That was our conversation yesterday.

JNM: – how did this happen? Because, and again it goes back to this sort of there was some autonomy, like our student government, for example, which I was president of one year, and I went to sort of pass the baton to talk about change to our next SGA president, whose name I forget. And she just virtually said, well, “I’m thinking of disbanding the government anyhow next year.” [laughter] Well, okay. Here are our records, you know? Keep our archives safe. But yeah, I mean, because, you know, [00:47:00] we did have that sense of kind of autonomy, and an identity. I think an identity within it that I do think is part of, you know, again, it’s on the one hand or on the other hand. So I think it was inevitable. Look at all our sister institutions, you know, never mind our brother institutions like Dartmouth which went coed, but look at Radcliffe and Harvard, and so on and so forth. So, I mean, the march of history was, was there.

BL: And we did get to vote on merging the alumni. And we obviously voted to merge, so –

NS: Well, I mean, the classes in the ’50s were really up in arms about the merger. They were very angry at the loss of the Pembroke name, and I could never quite understand why they felt so strongly about it. I had already, by that time, started saying that – I mean, very early after I got out of school, and the first two years I lived in Washington, nobody down there had ever heard of Pembroke, and they might have heard of Brown. So I quickly started just saying I graduated [00:48:00] from Brown, because in fact, I did, so –

MMA: Actually, I was going to ask that, how many people identify themselves as having come from Pembroke rather than Brown? But in the long run, I think the addition of women, or just combining, strengthened Brown. I think Brown’s reputation, when we were going here, among the Ivy League, a step – You know, we were not there. And I really think that once we combined, and they defined a certain person that they were looking for in the admissions. And that really had a great deal to do with what has happened to Brown’s reputation.

F: Yeah, so don't you think the new curriculum had a lot to do with it, also?

JD: Yeah, a lot of things came together at the same time.

MMA: Yeah. But it really was that whole person, that what makes you stand out. How many of you ever interviewed [00:49:00] candidates for Brown, you know? Oh, all of the kids are highly qualified, and what they are looking for is really what makes you different. What's your passion? And they have built a reputation in that.

NS: Out of the box thinkers.

CSD: We were talking about that last night, and how discouraged many people became from doing interviewing that so few of their interviewees got accepted. I mean, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

NS: Yeah. That's why I stopped.

JD: Yeah, me too.

CSD: What are they thinking of? This person is extraordinary.

EPC: Well, I think Brown just has more applications, you know, for the number of places than any of the other schools, so –

BL: Yeah, it was great when I was in Chelmsford, because a good percentage of them got accepted. But once I moved to the North Country, no one (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) accepted. [laughter] I was just spinning my wheels up there.

EPC: That's something, [00:50:00] remember Nancy said yesterday, Nancy Lehart –

MMA: The P word from "polite."

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

LBL: Well, but that was true at every school. Yeah. And it's still everywhere. Yeah. Everyone.

WK: I'm sorry, I missed it. What's still true?

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

BL: – get accepted, because they're looking for –

LBL: Geographic diversity, right. Yeah.

JNM: For New York versus Wyoming, because there's so many (inaudible).

EPC: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) New York kind of are prejudiced.

BL: A New York limit. [laughter]

EPC: Because there are so many.

LBL: There's so many applicants, yes.

CSD: I've always said, if you're an extraordinary oboe player from Utah or something, you (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

LBL: Exactly. Absolutely.

CSD: – far better chance than, you know. They have to do this whole dis – You know, they do, they need people for the teams, and, you know.

BL: Broadening the experience for the students, too.

NS: I was a little disheartened yesterday, though, the notion that, you know, I was happy to see 15% of the class [00:51:00] now is from foreign countries, but then the notion that it was because they could actually pay for their education. You know, that upset me, since it's need-blind, why is that any different when they're international?

LBL: Well, but that's the reality of it. But my daughter's a college counselor so I hear all this constantly. And, you know, I think one of the things she says is nowadays, to a selective university, you have to have a hook. You know, something has really got to catch the attention of the admissions office. But she has also commented on the fact that so many colleges are recruiting overseas now. And it is because they will pay their own way. You know, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

NS: But that means you only get the financially elite, and not the intellectually elite who might have the resources. And I guess it's because I work with Tanzania, you know? I can't imagine a Tanzanian who can afford to come here.

LBL: No, it's more like China and places like that that they're recruiting the people who will [00:52:00] pay their own way. Yeah.

NS: Yeah. Or the Middle East.

LBL: And the Middle East, yes.

MMA: I bet you could get a student from Tanzania into Brown. Keep trying. [laughter]

JNM: Oh yes, she probably could.

NS: That's my dream.

JBB: See it's also the educational background. People from China and the people from Japan and the people from places like that who are coming here have gone to very, very good schools. They have to have the money to do that. So when they apply, they come with a background. When we were in Tanzania, it didn't strike me that there were that many places you could be in school which would provide you with a background which Brown would accept, not because it doesn't want to, but because they were (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

NS: It's all [rogue learning?]. Yeah.

BL: It's unfair to the student, actually.

JBB: And I think that's very important, actually, in that as a whole, is to have not just getting kids all the way through school so that they have something to rely on, but also to have schools that have enough [00:53:00] challenge in them that kids from there can apply to scholarships here. You have to fit them.

JNM: Can I ask another question?

WK: Sure.

JNM: Just, what's your perception of the way you see Brown as perceived today? Just in the world, or, you know, people you've come across, friends, whatever?

NS: Way more respect today than it was when we were here.

CSD: It's a known quantity. It shows up in novels, it's –

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

EPC: You know, anyone that I've had an experience with that I'd quantify, they'd say, "Oh, the open curriculum, how wonderful," so that's well known. And that was, of course, before our time.

LBL: I will say that Brown does seem to have a great reputation now, and I think particularly in the creative fields. But in a highly competitive town [00:54:00] like Washington, DC, where everyone is Type A, there's still a perception that, well, really, if you want to make the right contacts, the Harvard, Yale, Princeton is the place to go for that.

NS: Well, you know, what I've noticed in the last few years, I think somehow Brown must have suddenly hired a fantastic PR person or people, because I listen to NPR every morning, and on any topic of interest, you know, of sort of unique interest as opposed to the mainline news events, there's often a commentator from Brown, and a professor.

JBB: Oh, there are several who have been there, but their whole careers have been there, who graduated from here and went to NPR. And then (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

NS: Went to, yeah, right, right. Like [Merle Isen?]. Yeah.

JNM: It is interesting what you're saying, because, you know, they say the top three Ivies, it's Harvard, Princeton – I've been working at Harvard for the last six years, so it's a little bit – but my daughter was accepted at both Harvard and Brown. [00:55:00] And Harvard puts a full-court press on their prospective freshmen. They give you a Harvard ID, you go for a week, you get assigned. I mean, they do a really good job. I should talk to our admissions office about this. In making the case for why you should come to, you know, Harvard, is if they need to take the case too much. But she turned down Harvard, and went to Brown. And I said to her, you know, again, for all the reasons you say, out in the larger world, all you have to do is say a name. But she said, "I could see myself here." And it goes back to sort of the way I responded to Brown when I saw myself here. She said "I felt I could really, you know, try new things, you know? Do what I felt like doing and that kind of thing."

LBL: I don't argue with that. I think that's right.

NS: I've had kids say to me that, two things, one, the professors are more accessible, whereas at Harvard, you know, you never see the big name professors. And then lectures are so big, [00:56:00] you know, they're just not accessible. And the other thing is that the students here are so friendly and open and accepting that they really feel at home immediately, which supports what your daughter was saying.

JNM: And the third thing, too, is – and I work with undergraduates – is they have such a pressure on them to sort of – so you don't just say, “Oh, I think I'll try out for the theater,” never having tried out, you know, for the theater. You have to be almost a semipro, you know, to really compete in getting into an extracurricular activity. So, you know, there are still a lot of things there. But yeah, but I think you're right.

LBL: Well, I'm just quoting. [laughter] I don't necessarily agree.

JNM: No, but I think you're right about the perception.

CSD: It's been fun having graduated from a hot school that wasn't –

JW: It wasn't hot when we were here. [laughter]

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

LBL: Yeah, I would say before it was trendy, is my expression. [laughter]

NS: But I wonder if we lived in Oklahoma City, if we'd have that same reaction. I mean, a lot of us live in [00:57:00] the Boston area where, you know, everybody wants to go to Brown. Everybody who could possibly imagine going to a good school.

CSD: Well, we do have classmates from Oklahoma. So Brown does has somewhat of a –

MMA: Yeah, maybe we should ask Joanne. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) Yeah, she teaches at University of Oklahoma. So she's, you know, been there, you know, for years now.

JW: I think the Midwest still has trouble getting people into the idea of sending a kid to a school in the East. For a middle class Middle-Westerner, it's a little bit of a stretch. It's more of a, you know, well, there's the local great state university, you can go there. But other places, I think out on the coasts, and the South, very desirable.

NS: And actually, Stanford has seemed to me to become the competitor to Brown, as opposed to Harvard, you know? A lot of people [00:58:00] get accepted at both, turn down Brown, and go to Stanford. This is just a – I mean, I don't have any numbers to support that.

LBL: The pull of California.

JNM: Providence – (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

MMA: Providence has also changed, really.

BL: It's better than it used to be.

MMA: But it still rains a lot.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

MMA: It is something that you can take pride in Providence right now, and you can take pride in Brown. Which, I'm not so sure that that was really accurate when we were here. So it's just grown.

LBL: No, I always felt it was the well-kept secret, you know, that we had, again, this wonderful access to the faculty in a way that we knew students weren't getting at the bigger schools with

the much bigger graduate programs and all. But yeah, now you don't have to tell people that. Yeah. [00:59:00]

EPC: It's interesting, even though there are certainly a lot of graduate schools, and there's a medical school now, the focus is really on undergraduates. And this is not true of whether I – my husband's a Columbia College alum, it's very beloved. And, you know, the focus is more the graduate schools, and undergraduates are just kind of like over here. That's not true at Brown. I think (inaudible) access to the faculty and all, the focus is really, like, on us. So that's maybe great of a graduate experience for us.

LBL: Yeah. I started graduate school at Johns Hopkins, and oh, what a dull campus. It was, at that time, all men. And all they wanted to do was get through college and get into medical school or whatever. You know, it was a very unlively campus. And my impression was the faculty members didn't care much about them either, the undergraduates.

NS: That's a real problem for (inaudible).

WK: Well, I can't [01:00:00] thank you enough. This has been a really great conversation between all of you. And I know you have a lunch date that's five minutes in. But I do appreciate you coming by during your reunion, coming back to talk with us. And I'll be in touch. Thank you so much.

- END -