

Transcript – Class of 1967, 50th Reunion

Narrator: Carol Lemlein, Susan Haas, Brenda Hubbard, Karen Wolk, Sharon Drager, and Judith Minno

Interviewer: Mary Murphy

Interview Date: May 22, 2017

Interview Time: 2:15 PM

Location: Pembroke Hall, room 202, Rhode Island

Length: 1 audio files; 55:36

Track 1

Mary Murphy: So thank you all for coming. I'm going to begin today just by giving a formal introduction for our record. My name is Mary Murphy, and I am the Nancy L. Buc Pembroke Center Archivist, and I'm going to be hosting this interview today. It's Saturday, May 27th. This interview is taking place in Pembroke Hall on the second floor, room 202, and it's just about 2:15 PM. We are gathered here to take your memories and hear your memories about your time at Pembroke, and your life after Pembroke, and maybe your life before Pembroke. [laughter] I'd like to begin this interview by going around the room and asking each of you to introduce yourself. Tell us, if you're comfortable of course, where you were raised, where you came from before Pembroke, maybe about your first experiences on campus coming to Pembroke, [01:00] and where you ended up, where you live now, and maybe what you're doing. I'll begin here.

Susan Haas: My name is Susan Haas Bralove. I grew up in West Hartford, Connecticut. And I came to Pembroke because I had a boyfriend at Brown. By the time I got here he had flunked out for the third and final time, [laughter] so I had to kind of make it on my own. I was an Art major. While I was here, I also was looking for someone to, at the time, to get married to because I thought that was what came next after my education. And I found someone I loved after my junior year, and was married. And I'm now married to my second husband. We live in Washington, D.C., and have had careers in early childhood education and in architecture. [02:00] And I'm a community volunteer on several local boards on the arts and health care in Washington.

MM: Thank you.

Karen Wolk: I'm Karen Wolk Feinstein, although my kids say, "Fein-stine," which is awkward because we all live right near each other, and some of us are Feinsteins and some of us are "Fein-stines." I came to Pembroke because I just loved it. We visited Wellesley and Radcliffe, and I don't know. I didn't feel it. And then I came here on a beautiful day, like right now, and I fell in love. Also the woman who interviewed me in the admissions office was Welsh. I didn't know that. And she asked what my favorite book was, and I said, "'How Green Was My Valley.'" So I got my acceptance on September ninth. [laughter] And my head mistress had said, "Please say 'Moby Dick' or 'To the Lighthouse' if they ask you your favorite book." But honesty is the best policy. [03:00] I studied History and Political Science here, American Intellectual History. And I have taught at Boston College and Carnegie Mellon, but for the last 25 years I run a health foundation. I did live in Boston 20 years, but we returned to Pittsburgh, which is our home. And then for some wonderful reason our children followed, so we're repopulating Pittsburgh.

Carol Lemlein: And I'm Carol Lemlein. I grew up on Long Island, although I had traveled a good deal before then. My father was in the service. I wanted to major in physics. And when I interviewed at other women's colleges, I just wasn't impressed with what would happen. For instance, at Radcliffe, I was told that really instead of taking an AP course, I should take a second language. [laughter] And it [04:00] discouraged me a great deal. I applied here early decision. I also left in my second half of my junior year to get married. I did graduate from Brown on time because I had a considerable amount of advanced placement at that point. I stayed home and raised kids for a while. I taught math for a while. I then earned a master's degree at Sloan and worked in high tech for some time. When I retired, I took some time off. And now I run a nonprofit in historic preservation, which is in some ways more work than I had working. [laughter] But I now volunteer there. And I really enjoy both the intellectual content of it, and also for the first time in my life [05:00] I have women colleagues, which I really did not have working in high tech in the days when I was working there.

Sharon Drager: I'm Sharon Drager. I grew up in New York on the Upper West Side. I first came to Brown after my junior year in high school. I was at a summer science program for high school

students. And I had been interested actually in Pembroke before that, and that sort of sealed the deal. And I had gone to a girls' school, and I wanted to be somewhere where there were some boys around. I left high school. It was a very intellectual, and competitive, and high-powered school, but we were basically social idiots. So I wanted to [laughs] see a little bit more of the other side of life. I came here planning to go to medical school. I graduated in three years, again because of AP credits. [06:00] And I did go to medical school after majoring in biology here. I then trained as a vascular surgeon. I moved to California, and I've been in Berkley ever since. And I'm still practicing vascular surgery. I was one of the first women vascular surgeons in the country. I have also been president of medical staff of a few hospitals. And I've also been president of my county medical association too. And additionally, I've been married three times. The third time took. I have two children and three grandchildren.

MM: Thank you.

Judith Minno: I'm Judy Minno Hushon. I came from northern Virginia. And I too came through the summer program here at Brown that was run the National Science Foundation. And there were 20 of us here that summer, approximately [07:00] anyway, boys and girls. And I loved what I did. In fact, I went back to my high school, continued doing microbiology, and ended up with a Westinghouse because of what I had been doing here at Brown. Then I applied early decision. I got in. I think I just interviewed while I was up here on campus. I think it was almost a done deal because I think everybody who was there got in. [laughter] Anyway, it was one of those sorts of things. But it was a lovely senior year because of that. I came to Brown, and I wanted either biology or math, and then decided on Biology.

I had been programming, but that wasn't the math that I was being presented with. And I was having more trouble figuring out how I wanted to apply that math and I didn't want to do that for the rest of my life. But I went on in microbiology. I went on to graduate school, and eventually got a PhD [08:00] But I married John Hushon, who I met my first semester at Brown in French class, which was a requirement. And we were married in July after we graduated, so our 50th is coming up. And I only have one. [laughter] Same one. I have two sons, one of whom is a Brown graduate, and three grandchildren. I worked for about 40 years in environmental consulting business. And it was human and environmental health toxicology, ecotoxicology. I've

worked on about 20 super fun sites. I'm still doing some of this work, although I do it now gratis for the county and the city. And I still have done, for example, evaluating fracking chemicals. I mean this is some of my later, more recent stuff, which of course, who ever heard [09:00] about doing that years ago?

KW: Keep going. Don't stop we need to know.

JM: Anyway, so I continued to do that. And I also stay busy. One of the other things I did while I was at Brown was I still was sewing. And I am now the costumier for Upper Naples, which is a very demanding job. I think I'm working as hard now as I ever worked when I was working my work. [laughter] Except I don't get paid. But anyway, it's good. We love to travel. We travel a lot. And we enjoy coming back to Brown. I've been on Women's Leadership Council now for about seven years. And that's been very gratifying.

MM: Thank you.

Brenda Hubbard: I'm Brenda Hubbard Roggeveen. I grew up in a very small town in Connecticut and went to public high schools and all of that. I picked Pembroke because I had been a foreign exchange student in junior year. So out of small-town Connecticut I got to see a lot of the world. [10:00] And, you know, even 800 people your own age on a ship for 10 days while you're all going off to these journeys. So I wanted a larger school than the ones I'd applied to. In this sense, Brown worked perfectly for me. I told the admissions people I wanted to major in math because that's where my scores were, and then never took a math course once. [laughter] So I did poli. sci. and economics for international relations because that was my experience. And my orientation was toward getting out and working in the world in some sort of aspect. So that worked well. I ended up going to Brazil to teach after school. And then I married a Brown man. It was the Vietnam War, so there was traveling. He was in the navy and traveling, traveling. We lived all over. That marriage ended after about 15 years, and then I [11:00] have remarried and been married for 30 years. So that's great. With stepchildren and all that. I got an MLS while we were traveling around in the Navy, and then an MBA back in Connecticut, and then worked in

20 years in insurance, and then dusted off the library degree and went back to doing reference and a lot of teaching in libraries. I'm very involved with ESL now as a volunteer.

MM: And where do you live now?

BH: West Harford. [laughter] Same small town. Hartford, forgive me.

MM: Well, thank you so much for offering those introductions. What I hope we can do now is speak in conversation about your time in Pembroke. And I'd like to throw out the idea of highs and lows. If you feel comfortable, if you could offer maybe some of your greatest memories or your happiest memories, [12:00] time on campus, or something that really sticks with you that was maybe an inspiring moment at Pembroke. And then also if you're comfortable sharing a challenging time on campus and something that maybe stuck with you in the other way, in another way.

KW: Do you want us to go in order?

MM: No. You can just throw in. Please jump in wherever you're comfortable speaking.

KW: I would say this. I thought my education was extraordinary. I didn't feel it in my high school, a small girls' school. I really, sadly, except for a couple instructors, didn't feel inspired. But here, in both American social and intellectual history and poli. sci., there was professor that did com. law. He was extraordinary. And so I was very interested in social movements. I thought I wanted to be a labor organizer. I thought I wanted to be Emma Goldman. [laughter] And the fact that he really indulged that. So I sort of couldn't write something [13:00] that was radical enough to make them unhappy. And they were terrific. And when I had an interest in something, there's a politician from South Africa named Helen Suzman who was really amazing. She was the only parliamentarian against apartheid. And the faculty just encouraged it. They'd find me books. They'd find libraries I could go to. So I thought that educationally I was very excited. The thing I liked least was the fraternity life. Didn't like it then, don't like it now. I think it breeds not

good things. I think it sort of in some ways destroys the reason to be in college. I love Pembroke because we didn't have sororities. And I thought that was a real strong point.

MM: Do you have a memory? What were your interactions with fraternities?

KW: Parties where people got – well, there was liquor spilled all over the floor. One might get drunk and possibly passed out. [14:00] It was loud. Dancing, drinking, and sort of dumb conversation, if there was any. And I just thought that for me that was not the best part of college. I thought it was the worst part. I mean I didn't want to sit home on weekends, so I went. [laughter] But I had a boyfriend at Yale, and the fraternities were really minimal there. They weren't important. I felt there was a different spirit on the weekend that I thought was a little bit more appropriate to why we come for four years of learning.

JM: You know what's interesting. My husband, who is now my husband, was in an independent dorm. And he was in one of the fraternity houses, but it wasn't a fraternity. And I think that was a much better, healthier environment. And yes, they had parties. They hired bands. They had parties. But it was not as [15:00] gross as some of the fraternity parties were.

MM: Other highs and lows?

JM: I would like to say that my favorite professor was Frank Rothman. And he later became Provost. But Frank taught some biology courses and microbiology courses. But his exams were so much fun. They were very creative and very – if you knew what he had taught you, they were like solving puzzles. And you could work your way right through to the end. You just had to keep going and do it. It was a lot of steps, and you had to do it all, but was fine. And since I've moved to Florida, guess who lives in Naples? Frank Rothman. [laughter]. And so I've been able to see him for the last 12 years off and on. And we have lunch every so often and get together. So it's been a very nice relationship. It kind of went from a – to a [16:00] peer relationship now. But it's interesting.

SD: Well my favorite professor was Peter McGraw also. That's who it was.

CL: Loved him. Loved him.

SD: Who taught com. law. It wasn't com. It was American constitutional history is what the course was called. It was fantastic. I was a bio major, but this was absolutely my favorite course at Brown. He was a wonderful teacher. He went on to become I think president at the University of Missouri later in his career. But he was a very charismatic and inspiring educator. And I'll never forget him. So I think that was the high point of my studies. The things that I found harder, I think the social life was a little hard here. I did become friendly eventually with some of the other pre-meds, and that was sort of a friendship thing. [17:00] But the social life was a little bit challenging. The fraternities, and the pickups, and a lot of the guys leaving campus every weekend to go to other women's schools. It just wasn't easy. The other thing that was a little hard for me was that some of my courses were really hard. [laughter] Really hard. I thought I had hard stuff in high school, but I was a regular biology major and most of the courses were for real science majors. I was astonished that they were as hard as they were, and you couldn't just race through it or do well just because you wanted to. You really had to learn how to study.

JM: Jordy's architecture course was another one.

KW: It was wonderful.

JM: I don't know how many of you took it.

KW: It was so wonderful.

JM: And hasn't it given you an appreciation of other buildings?

KW: My whole life.

JM: As you drive around?

KW: Yeah.

JM: I mean you see all of those buildings. [18:00] There are a bunch of them in Pittsburgh.

KW: It was Richardson.

JM: Yes, Richardson.

KW: That's where I learned that my hometown was actually –

JM: Yes.

KW: I thought that was a high point of academic.

JM: It really was.

KW: Yes.

JM: Its only drawback was it was at 1:00. And they used to call it darkness at noon. [laughter]
And a whole lot of people slipped through.

BH: Yeah, the lights would dim, right?

JM: You'd walk in. You've just had lunch. They turned the lights out.

SH: That course had a great –

JM: That was so good.

SH: – influence on my deciding to become an architect.

JM: Did it really?

SH: It did. Professor Jordy was so eloquent I still remember phrases he used to describe Richardsonian architecture. And I kept my notes from that class for years. And I later heard the Yale professor Vincent Scully speak. And everyone had said, “This is the most incredible orator. His classes are amazing.” [19:00] And I thought, you should hear Professor Jordy speak. Once I was an architect I went to hear him speak at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. And the lights went out, and he started speaking, and I thought I was sitting in class at Brown University again. And I went up to him afterward and told him that I had become an architect very much due to the class I had taken years before.

CL: It’s interesting. One of my biggest disappointments of leaving Brown to get married was that I had finally gotten into Jordy’s class for the next semester, [laughter] and I didn’t get to take it. And I had been introduced to it by the first young man I dated at Brown who was taking the class. He was a sophomore. And we would walk all over the east side, and he would describe to me what he was learning from Jordy.

JM: That’s one of those courses that prepares you for life. Whether it prepares you for anything else, [20:00] to appreciate your life. And actually that’s one of the things. The way the Brown curriculum was set up, it’s a little different now than it was when we were there, but I think because you had to take some things in fields weren’t necessarily totally comfortable with, that prepared you for life. I mean I took an Egyptology course. [laughter] I was a science major. But I needed another art course. I mean it was just that sort of thing where you took things that were different.

KW: My religions of India didn’t work out so well. [laughter] It was my only C. And he was a very nice professor. He said, “I will pass you, but you don’t get it at all.” [laughter] So I’m not a Buddhist.

BH: We were talking last night about our senior year there was pass/fail.

JM: Yes.

SD: Right. That's right.

BH: You could take the courses pass/fail. And that was this incredible gift.

SD: It was.

BH: Because you just said, "Okay, I'm going to try this." That was the first crack in the curriculum, I guess, before the major innovation. But I took Russian with a bunch of engineers. It was like, okay, but it was great fun. And it gave you the courage to explore those things.

SD: Yes. And I got to take Professor [Shadel?]'s New Testament class.

JM: I took that one too.

SD: Which I knew I was not going to be able to –

JM: That's what I took for as pass/fail.

SD: Yes, and I took that with my pass/fail because I heard he was a great teacher, and he was. And probably I didn't really get it either, but [laughter].

JM: But you had a cultural issue.

SD: Yeah, but that wasn't it. I mean I really –

JM: I know. I remember Fran Isaacs was in there too.

SD: Yeah, right. He was a very good teacher.

JM: Yes, he was.

SD: Yeah.

SH: Brown had a new kind of category of courses when we were there. They were called university courses.

SD: Oh, yes.

JM: Yes.

SD: Yes.

SH: I think there were maybe five or six of them. You needed special permission to get into them. Instead of being limited to an area of academic pursuit, and everything was very carefully delineated and separated, these university [22:00] courses combined studies in various areas. And I had the opportunity of taking a course with George Morgan.

SD: And I took that also, yes.

SH: He knew science. He knew poetry. He knew history. He knew literature. He knew art. And I think he originated those classes. And that was the beginning of the kind of fields of study.

JM: They're still going on.

SH: But today people can choose their own majors as I understand it. And they really connect many areas of stuff.

SD: He was really a polymath. I mean he was expert in so many fields. And it was a very interesting course.

KW: There was a wonderful professor. I had to get into his course because I knew he was retiring my freshman year, Professor Hedges, who taught history. And I still hear, all these years later, in the back of my head, “The freest of people were the first to revolt.” [laughter] [23:00] So I quote that often, Professor Hedges. The one thing Brown offered: an intimacy that a lot of the other Ivy Leagues didn’t. We knew our professors. I got the cutest note from abroad, at the end, when they used to send your grades on postcards. He said, “Cheers, cheers, have no fear, 67 is a pirate year.” [laughter] But oh, they knew you. I mean they knew what team you rooted for. We went to parties at Forrest McDonald’s, which we probably shouldn’t have, but they were great parties. And Professor McLaughlin, social and intellectual history, they knew us. They knew what our interests were. And I don’t think at every Ivy League school you got that intimacy. That was special.

MM: I’m hearing two things. I’m hearing inspiration with your professors, male professors, that were incredibly supportive of their female students and achievement, academic achievement in that way, and then in the context of [24:00] 1964 to 1967. So of course there is entrenched patriarchy in society as you meet graduation. So I don’t know if you can give voice to that. Or what was that like to be learning, and achieving, and then facing American society as it was in 1967?

JM: In biology, we had the first female professor.

SD: I think Professor Leduc.

JM: Professor Leduc, who was the first female professor at Brown, full professor. And that was in that range of time. I don’t know exactly when she got her professorship, but she was Professor. She was not an assistant professor. She was a full professor. But she was the first one.

KW: I don’t remember. I’m trying to remember a female professor. I’m not sure I had one.

SD: She was there.

JM: We would have had her.

SD: She taught us cell biology.

CL: I certainly didn't have any female professors.

SD: But think of the context. We weren't thinking [25:00] in those terms. That wasn't on the radar screen. I mean feminist theory was years off.

JM: But we were kind of told that we could do anything we wanted to do. I mean nobody was saying, "You can't do this."

SD: That's true.

JM: And so for most of my career, I may have been one of one or two women doing whatever it was. You explained that you at Teradyne, you had that issue.

CL: Well, I encountered that issue some when I was here in physics. I remember meeting my advisor. And I probably should've been an engineer, but it didn't occur to me. I was very interested in physics from high school. But I thought I would end up working in industry and when I said that to my advisor, he kind of looked at me. And the truth was they were only interested in [26:00] people who wanted to be PhDs in the sciences, or at least that's what I found in physics. And it was sort of like it was okay that I was a girl, but if I didn't want to grow up to be like him, he wasn't that interested. And I found that very discouraging.

KW: And I was the only woman in my department at Carnegie Mellon. And none of the guys wanted to do advisement. Who does? You know? People come up to you. I can't find an apartment. Or my girlfriend broke up with me. Or what should I do when I graduate? So I thought, being the only woman, I was like the advisor for hundreds of students, and I really didn't like it.

MM: Any thoughts on that? So I think it's just fascinating, and the era. As I was researching the era when you attended college, the US was literally about to just pull apart at the seams. So the effect of the Vietnam conflict [27:00] as it's just really churning at the time, and how –

JM: Well we have the death of –

BH: President Kennedy.

JM: President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy.

BH: Yes.

SD: I think JFK died our freshman, the first semester of our freshman year. And we were all –

JM: And then Robert –

SD: Just glued to the TVs.

MM: Can you tell me, yeah, any memories that you have, of course.

SD: Of course. I think anyone here can tell you where they were when they heard.

SH: Absolutely. In fact, I shared that with my husband this morning.

SD: I know where I was staying on Thayer Street when I heard the news.

MM: Can I hear some of these memories?

JM: Yeah. I was walking across campus and somebody said, "The president's been shot." And I said, "Barnaby Keeney?" [laughter] And I thought, "Who would want shoot Barnaby Keeney?"

CL: And Judy, do you remember Ben Dix convinced –

JM: Yeah.

CL: – us to all go to the Episcopal church. And it was so comforting even if we weren't of that religion.

JM: We just went down with the same geography. It was (inaudible).

CL: It just felt right to be there. And then I took the train home to New York. [28:00] And it was right before Thanksgiving. And there were huge numbers of college students doing the same thing.

KW: I was on the street.

CL: Getting out of school early. We were all upset.

BH: First of all, they basically cancelled so many things.

CL: Everybody shut down.

KW: I was going away. It was Yale-Harvard weekend. I was on my way to New Haven. And as I walked by the TV room, it's the middle of the day in Andrews Hall, I looked in and there were all these people in the TV room. And so I stuck my head in. Because it was usually empty all day. What's up? And they said the president's been shot.

SD: I went to my class. It was an English section. And the instructor said, "Just go. Just go home."

BH: Yeah. That's what happened.

SD: I was one of those people clustered around the TV in Andrews. [laughter]

BH: I was just going to say that I think that was the other part of it. When you think about campus life, and you can't even compare it to 50 years ago. but [29:00] there was a different way of finding information, absorbing information. You did it in community in a very different way. So I think that that experience, it's so embedded. It's where I was, and who, and that sense of standing in the TV room and just, you know.

KW: And not to be frivolous, two months later the Beatles came to the US. And we also all gathered in the TV room in Andrews. And we screamed and acted ridiculous. They were so close chronologically that in some bizarre way, when I think of Kennedy being shot, I think of the Beatles getting off the airplane.

SD: When was it that Bob Dylan came? Was it a spring weekend?

KW: He came to us in May.

JM: It was a spring weekend.

SD: But he wasn't on campus. He was downtown.

KW: Was he? No, I think he was in –

BH: Well, in a big [30:00] auditorium, huh?

SD: In a big auditorium. I remember it was when he first went electric. And he had the Hawks with him who later became The Band. Oh, I went to that concert. [laughter] Yeah, I remember that. And I remember the year before, after our freshman year we went to Newport Folk Festival and saw our prince and princess, Joan Baez and Bob Dylan.

BH: We also had Martin Luther King on campus. There was a lot going on during those four years, and a lot going on socially then.

KW: We were also on the cusp of activism. And one of the faculty, I'm guessing it was McGrath, one of the faculty arranged for me to go down the hill to the Urban League. So after class I went down. And we actually drew up a plan to desegregate the Rhode Island schools. And that was a high point. I mean you could study racism. You could talk about how the constitution of this country isn't being observed. [31:00] But the excitement was that it actually helped me become part of that, become part of history, not just study it.

MM: And protests on campus?

SD: I don't think there was that much.

KW: No.

JM: That was the next year.

SD: It was the next year.

KW: It was really very quiet.

JM: A lot of guys were worried because they knew that as soon as they graduated from college, they were –

KW: One-A.

BH: Drafted.

JM: – one-A. And they were getting their draft numbers while we were on campus. They were getting their what number were they in the draft. I remember some people being very happy and

some people being very worried. And I remember one young man who thought he was fine. Getting a high number. Except that he came from Texas. And there weren't enough people who could pass the intelligence test in Texas, and he got called. These were happening. [32:00] The guys were dealing with it. I mean we were dealing with it too, but it was all happening.

MM: And would they pull the numbers? How would they be.

SD: It was a lottery.

JM: It was a lottery.

CL: By your birthday.

JM: By your birthday. They pulled your birthday out of a hat, and then they just posted the list.

BH: This was a national thing.

KW: And so it was also kind of the thing to be married when you left. That was not at all unusual. But the Vietnam War accelerated it. So when I first got married right after I graduated, that kept my husband out. Then they decided that something else had to happen, then we had a baby. [laughs] So we were one step ahead. We kept staying one step ahead of the draft. But I think for a number of us, it did accelerate marriage. When we first got married, that would have excluded him, but then we had to have a baby to stay out.

BH: Seal the deal. [laughter]

KW: You know. You had to have children.

JM: Now, we had our baby probably two years earlier than we would have. I had to stop doing [33:00] my PhD at that time. I'd got a master's, but I had stopped doing my PhD because I was

working with mutagens. I certainly was not going to get pregnant and be working in a lab with mutagens. So I stopped, I got pregnant, we had the baby. And it was years later before I –

KW: And they're wonderful children. [laughter] I mean I couldn't imagine life without them.

JM: It was just they came a little sooner.

KW: They arrived earlier.

JM: I mean we had no money. We had a baby.

MM: And about marriage. So I heard, as I'm listening, I hear marriage, and you were entering into marriages while you were still on campus, right, or right as you were leaving school. Talk to me about that, the culture of marriage on campus.

SH: I think we're a very in-between generation in many ways. I was part of the older generation where I felt with my [34:00] education, I was well educated in secondary school so I could get into a good college. And then I suppose I had to do well in college too, but the next expectation from my family, and I think from the culture, was that I would marry well, and then I would be a mother. And I don't think they ever thought about, "Well then, what do you do with your education after that?" But I think I was very much a part of that. And I think a lot of women became anxious as they were getting closer to graduation because they thought they had to get married. Or if they didn't, what were they going to do? And did they have to go to graduate school? And what was it going to be in? And as our Brown alumni monthlies would come once we graduated, I remember reading it and seeing that some of my classmates were being mothers and staying home in a traditional way, and others were having these exciting careers. And I felt a great deal of guilt [35:00] about not using the education that I had had in a direct way and having a career that some of my classmates were having.

BH: It also was a time when you didn't, for many families, you wouldn't have gone off and lived with someone.

KW: Never.

BH: No. It wasn't that golden age. When I think of my kids. [laughter] For four years before they got married, they live together. I go, okay, that was a much healthier system for lots of reasons. Everybody got to mature a little more before that.

KW: You would've been a fallen woman. [laughter] My parents could not have handled it. They just couldn't have. I mean it's hard to even imagine how fast it flipped. There was no option. If you wanted to have a regular, nightly engagement you got married.

SH: The school reinforced that. The school really was and the student plays the parents in loco parentis. And the school rule [36:00] I believe was that if you were a woman at Pembroke, you could not spend a night somewhere within a certain mile radius of Providence without special permission from your parents, which you couldn't spend a night with a guy. And you signed in and out of the dormitory.

BH: I just remember the RAs or one of the deans saying, "If you can't be a lady, be discreet." That was the message.

SH: I never got that. [laughter]

KW: We didn't get that.

SD: But I'm glad you heard it.

KW: But you covered for me. One night when someone signed me in and I wasn't in my parents called to say my sister had a baby. And Brenda really made up something but I can't remember what. "She's two floors below playing bridge," or something. I never played bridge. [laughter]

CL: No, but you know, talking to people and seeing how many of us are divorced, and I was divorced after 10 years, you wonder how much, especially if we married a bit older, [37:00] the different expectations created a lot of tension in our marriages. And I know it certainly produced – I mean I had a child before we graduated from Brown. And my husband, who always seemed to be reasonably intellectually compatible, his idea was, “It smells. Here.” [laughter] And because we were back home, we were around people who were a little bit older than we were. They had very traditional marriages. And that was his expectation, was that I’d take care of the kids and he’d bring home some money. And when I started being really antsy to get back into some kind of intellectually – I talked about it as wanting to go to work. And he said, “Well, I guess you could get a job at Woolworth’s or something like that.” [laughter]

KW: He went a long way.

CL: I mean [38:00] we were just totally incompatible that way. And my second husband is Brown class of ’69. We’ve been married 20 years now. And he was part of everything that was going on in Ira Magaziner’s era and all of that. And we’re a lot more compatible [laughter].

KW: That really worked out.

JM: Maybe the reason I’m still married is that my husband was very supportive that I went back. And in fact I was working when my child was born, and took a little bit of time off, and continued working for the next 15 months because it was the only salary we had coming in. And I took a little time off then, but went back to work. And it was very interesting. One day I was in the car when my little one piped up and said, “You know, Michael’s mommy doesn’t work. And I thought, ‘Oh boy, here it comes.’” And he said, “I bet [39:00] she hasn’t found the right job yet.” [laughter] Oh, I love that kid. And that’s one of my moments that I guess things were going well.

SD: Well, I had a different experience. I didn’t get married for the first time until I was a resident. I think more of this has to do with our generation rather than necessarily college. I think we were in a transitional period. Many women have happy marriages, but an awful lot of women

ultimately got divorced, and then went on to probably a better marriage after that. But I think it had to do with the time. But I wouldn't put it on schooling so much as the times.

KW: We also were expected to do everything.

SD: And we were expected to do everything.

KW: So I always worked. So at one point I had three children, I taught at Boston College, [40:00] I edited a journal, and I was getting my PhD at Brandeis. My husband never changed a diaper. I don't think he ever changed a crib sheet. He still doesn't know how to use the washer or dryer. He couldn't make a thing in the kitchen, and we thought that was – you know, when I look at my kids' arrangements, all three households, the husbands and wives are interchangeable. My daughter and my daughter-in-laws go off for the weekend, and their husbands just take over. We did everything, you know, worked, and studied, and totally managed the household, and didn't complain because we didn't know it could be different.

JM: It's true.

CL: I can remember joining a consciousness-raising club [laughter] when probably my kids were two and four, maybe a year older than that. And one of the women that I had known for some time said, [41:00] “Carol, I never saw anyone change so rapidly.” And I said, “You know, I haven't changed that much.” I'd gotten back the person I was before I went and settled in as a suburban housewife on Long Island for a few years.

KW: But if you said you could choose a different time to live, I would absolutely not. I loved the '60s. I love being part of the women's movement. I was living in Boston where the Women's Health Collective, “our bodies our selves.” I love the fact that we did have to think about it all, think about ourselves, invent the person we wanted to be. I don't think many of us wanted to be our mothers. You could speak up if you did. I did not want to be my mother. And the women sitting around the swimming pool playing bridge and talking about each other. Whoever didn't show up that day they all talked about. And, you know, we wanted something different. And so

this time of transition, the women's movement was very powerful. [42:00] And we came into our own. But I loved it. I mean I'm glad. It was an exciting time to be alive, and to see so many civil rights acts actually get passed. I worked on the war on poverty. And it was an amazing experience. They have done justice to the societal transformation. So I would say if you asked me, I loved when I lived growing up in the '50s. I loved coming of age sort of in the '60s. And I loved the social movements at the end of the '60s and '70s. So for me at least I wouldn't have it any other way. I mean, yeah, we had to evolve, and we had to figure it out ourselves, but it was kind of exhilarating.

JM: It was also a good time for the environmental movement. I mean the EPA really came into its own. We got our Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, RCRA, and TOSCA. All of these acts were passed because people became concerned about what was happening to the quality of our environment. I mean this was when the Cuyahoga [43:00] caught fire during this time. It was like that. [laughter] So people had an idea that things weren't going the right way and that we had to take the reins and make it right or we would destroy our world. And that could still be said. But it was a very exciting time for me to be working in that area because you could actually make policy. I mean, even though I was a consultant, I could make policy. I could work with the agency and make policy.

KW: And the women's friendships Pembroke allowed, I think it's great. We could have men in our lives, but I also loved living here when we had the nicest dorms. And we sort of had each other. So I come from a girls' school. And it was a great transition. It was a co-ed educational environment, which was invigorating. There was no second-class education at all. I mean it was excellent. But I also liked Pembroke the way it was.

MM: A couple of you have said that you were [44:00] actively involved in the women's movement. How about the rest of you?

JM: I wasn't actively involved, always supportive.

SD: I was never actively involved. I lived it. [laughter]

JM: When you're the only woman in a room of 40 men.

SD: Right. When you're the only woman in a room of 40 men and people are saying, "I don't think you should be doing this," you're living the women's movement. And so, yes, I did marches and all of that. But I think my life was much more a tribute to that than any marches I ever went on.

KW: You worked. And Sue, you were involved in Planned Parenthood.

SD: Well, I was going to say I wasn't involved at the time of the women's movement, but as years have gone by I've become involved with Planned Parenthood, and been very active in the Washington area, and the pro-choice movement. So it is [45:00] a part of my life.

SD: So I went on the women's march in January. I think many other people here probably did. The best sign I saw was someone, a woman of our generation, holding a sign said, "I can't believe I'm still protesting this shit." [laughter]

KW: Yes, yes! I have it on my iPhone.

SD: Which pretty much summed it up.

MM: What about access to birth control on campus?

JM: Well actually, Dr. Johnson, who was the doctor on campus at the time, let it be known that if anyone got pregnant, he had ways of taking care of it that didn't mean a back street abortion.

SD: He did?

JM: Yes, he did. No, he had said that. And I heard it. But it wasn't a back street abortion. Because he was very worried that somebody would go down and –

SD: But someone did. There was a girl. There were [46:00] girls who went to Puerto Rico.

BH: Went to Boston.

KW: Went to Boston, yeah. One almost died of an infection.

SD: This was a little before the pill was widely available. It was a few years, maybe three or four years before that became easily available through Planned Parenthood for young women. So I think people were still pretty nervous about getting pregnant.

KW: We didn't know. I didn't know about Dr. Johnson.

SD: I didn't know that either.

KW: We would raise money so people can pay for these back street abortions, which for some of us, it's been a lifetime of activism for choice. Just seeing women go through that.

JM: And I think we probably could've gotten birth control pills if we had really wanted them.

CL: Yes. I think we could have.

JM: Through the health center. If you went in and said, "I need them."

CL: Now the one when I went in had my pregnancy test. Dr. Johnson [47:00] said to me, "Do you want to have this baby?" And my boyfriend at the time, I had just gotten his miniature, and we had planned to get married, and I thought I was just changing the order of things in my life a bit, which Dr. Johnson kind of reinforced. And I was quite certain I wanted that baby, and she's wonderful. [laughter]. I did. Even though the marriage didn't last. But, yeah, it was kind of known that you could.

JM: There were things available if you just did it quietly. Don't embarrass me. It was that kind of thing.

CL: But I was telling Sue earlier today when Cecil –

SD: Cecile Richards.

CL: Cecile Richards spoke at the 125th, she was introduced by a woman I think from the class of '58 who had had an illegal abortion the week of her commencement. [48:00] And she talked about taking a bus to Pennsylvania, and what great pain she was in, and then coming back and trying to hide the pain from her parents when they arrived, right, because she didn't want them to know. I mean it's just a heart-wrenching story. And quite an introduction to what Planned Parenthood does for us today.

SD: I think that people don't know these stories. Younger women don't know anything about this.

MM: What happened to the woman in your class who got ill and almost died?

KW: She went to a hospital and she –

BH: After a couple of days. I mean she tried to just stay in the dorm.

KW: She was so sick, raging fever. And most of us didn't know. I didn't know much about infection or anything, but we knew she was really sick. And we hated to do this because it was sort of like telling on her.

BH: Betrayal?

KW: Yeah, exactly. But also she was so sick there was fear that she would die.

MM: So you knew that she had [49:00] had an abortion?

KW: Called an ambulance. Yeah, somebody called an ambulance. Oh yeah, we all knew. People contributed. It was –

BH: Early Kickstarter.

KW: It was a way of life. It was really very sad, and it could make anyone an activist. So it was in Boston that it was done. And it really was a back alley abortion. And as I remember it now, she kept getting sicker and sicker. And she was in a lot of pain. And she was spiking a fever. And eventually I think somebody called an ambulance. And she was fine. She recovered but it was scary.

MM: Was she punished?

KW: No. I don't remember that. No.

SH: There wouldn't have been punishment.

KW: No. I think she recovered.

JM: That wasn't the process.

KW: But it was a kind of notoriety. And the other issue put on the table because nowadays I walk around Brown. Of course we all live in a different era. The one thing also on campus you never did was reveal [50:00] your sexual preference if you weren't heterosexual. It didn't happen. You didn't talk about it. It wasn't a comfortable subject. If you were really angry at someone, sometimes people would say disparaging things. I think that has changed so dramatically. Just the acceptance of alternative preferences is so dramatically different. I think this generation wouldn't believe the world we lived in.

SD: I knew a same-sex couple here, male couple, when I was here. And people weren't nice about it. Not at all. There was a lot of talking about them. And they were pretending. It was all not good.

MM: That is a lot of change. [51:00] And around community, if you didn't fit into the cookie cut, right, if you were alternative in any way, was there space at Pembroke for being not within bounds? In whatever way that might be, a hippy or –

SD: That was easier.

JM: Yes.

SD: That wasn't a problem. And there were sort of – people formed affinities. And so alternative. [laughs]

CL: But it's relative.

SD: It's relative.

CL: We also got to be the right group to come with on that.

SD: That's also true.

KW: We were the tidy, going on, and doing something practical with our lives. I would say this thought, that one thing I found at Pembroke. I was comfortable I'll admit. We didn't have a lot of really alternative women the way other schools, some schools. Sarah Lawrence, Radcliffe to an extent, they were ahead of us. I think our class, you know, [52:00] there were a lot of circle collar shirts, and crew necks, and pleated skirts, and knee socks, and loafers. I think on the whole Pembroke did not lean toward the edgy. If it did, it was after we were gone.

CL: Do you remember that we couldn't wear slacks on campus until there was that big snow storm?

KW: Yes.

SD: Yes.

JM: Yes.

CL: And everybody wore slacks that week.

SD: Jeans, wore jeans.

CL: And we never went back. And I don't remember a whole lot being said about it. I think it was just the time for that to pass.

SD: Yeah, I'm thinking about alternative. I think that one thing is true that depression wasn't well recognized or handled well. You know, it wasn't sort of acceptable.

KW: And in a way nobody ever felt in college, I think on the whole, there wasn't a sense that you fit in. And I know that sounds like an odd thing to say because we're mostly tidy people [53:00] who were good students who came here to do something with our lives and study hard. That was sort of the profile I remember. But I think if you said to anyone, "Do you really fit in?" In a funny way, they'd say, "No. I don't quite fit in." [laughter] I don't know if any of you felt that way.

SD: Yeah.

CL: Yeah.

KW: I felt, yes, but there was something to me very strange about an environment of all people the same age. I was telling Brenda this too last night. I came from an extended family that was always hanging out together. And there was something odd about being an environment where everyone was about the same age.

CL: I think there was also the thing that, and I've been hearing it this weekend that Brown men were very conscious of the fact that Pembroke was more selective than Brown was. And therefore we were kind of set aside and not really treated [54:00] as social equals even though it was more –

JM: And we often beat the guys grade-wise.

CL: Yes.

KW: And we liked it.

CL: And we liked it, and they didn't.

KW: And we thought that was fine. And the faculty. I never felt that my faculty in any way looked down on us because we were women. I think they really liked the Pembrokers because we were eager learners. And we weren't just copying the notes or whatever.

CK: Not troublemakers.

KW: We were at least reading the books that were in the library.

CK: Most of us were not partying as hard as we were studying.

SD: And we were a bunch of good girls basically.

KW: So I didn't feel in class ever that there was a preference for the guys.

BH: But I mean even during the weekdays it was only in our senior year where you could be out until midnight during the weekday to go to the library. I remember it was 10:00 and the doors were closed to the dorms when we were freshman. [55:00] You toed the line.

MM: We're coming up to the end of our hour. I want to thank you again for taking time out, especially right when this weather cleared, coming up and speaking with me today. This interview will be recorded, and a transcript is going to be made, and the interview will become part of the Brown Women Speak Oral History Project. So please do check out the oral history project online. And I will let you know as soon as the interview is available. So thank you.

SH: Thank you very much.

CL: Thank you.

SD: Thank you.

JM: Thank you.

BH: Thank you.

KW: Thank you.

- END -