

Transcript — Class of 1985 25<sup>th</sup> Reunion

Narrators: Frances Lee, Suzanne Goldberg, Margaret Rosen, Karen Smith, Allison Tucker Mitchell, Katherine Melchoir Ray, and Jill Hereford Caskey

Interviewer: Jane Lancaster

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JL: [00:00:00] Hi, it's May 29, 2010. I'm talking to some members of Brown's twenty-fifth reunion class as part of the Pembroke Center's Oral History project. Welcome, all of you.

GROUP: Thank you.

JL: First of all, I'd like you to introduce yourselves, just briefly say what your name is, your major was, and perhaps why you came to Brown. And then we'll go on from there. So, Frances, can we start with you?

Frances Lee: Sure. My name is Frances Lee. I majored in organizational behavioral management. I came to Brown because of the choices that I had, the people who reached out to me from Brown were very warm and I just felt that it would be a good place to be.

JL: Thank you.

Suzanne Goldberg: I'm Suzanne Goldberg. I concentrated in political science and took a lot of history, and I came to Brown – I think I didn't actually know that much about it, but I [00:01:00] loved the idea of how creative and independent it was, and I knew something about the progressive curriculum and the freedom of choice. And that's a lot of what motivated me.

JL: Thank you.

Peg Rosen: My name is Peg Rosen and I was a history major. And, I came to Brown, I think, because I grew up in a town that I wanted to get out of – a very – a town that was very homogeneous. And I needed to go to a place where it was okay to be smart and have your own thoughts, and was open and – to the kind of way – diversity that I didn't have growing up.

(interview interrupted: door opens; overlapping dialog; inaudible)

JL: Can you shut the door please? (door closes) Who are those people? I don't know. (laughter) Sorry about that. Peggy. Yes.

Karen Smith Catlin: I'm Karen Smith Catlin and I studied computer science [00:02:00] at Brown. And, I came here – I am from Rhode Island originally and I was not that adventurous, and so this was the best school in my backyard. It was certainly a great choice.

JL: Okay, thanks.

Allison Tucker Mitchell: I'm Allison Tucker Mitchell. I was a chemistry major, and I came to Brown – it was a great school, and between my choices, they still had a change of seasons, so I came east. (laughter) That was my choice.

Katherine Melchoir Ray: My name is Katherine Melchior Ray, and I came to Brown – I was a history major here, and also studied Japanese quite intensively, and Japanese history. And, I came to Brown from San Francisco because I felt it was more different for me to go to – come to Brown and try the East Coast rather than going to Stanford, which I thought was where I wanted to go since I was about eight years old. And actually, we came really right down to having both letters [00:03:00] at the mailbox and I couldn't decide, and I came to Brown a second time and it was spring fling weekend, so (laughter) that basically sold me. (laughter)

Jill Hereford Caskey: I'm Jill Hereford Caskey, and I grew up on Cape Cod. I majored in studio art at Brown. I came to Brown partly because RISD was next door; I knew I could take classes there. And also, like Frances said, there was a girl from my high school who had come to Brown

the year ahead of me, and she was so nice and so smart and I didn't know much about Brown actually. I wasn't that far away, but – actually when I graduated, my principal announced I was going to BU. He thought that was Brown back then, BU, Brown University, like Boston University, that was it. So they didn't – it was so different then, but it was really having someone who was just so kind and so nice and so smart, I always wanted to be in a place like that.

JL: That's interesting, the fact that I have two of you saying that people were very kind to you. [00:04:00] Two of you wanted a different climate. (laughter) One who talked about the curriculum, so let's just go on to the curriculum. How much did you know about the New Curriculum before you arrived? Any of you?

ATM: I don't think I knew anything – I knew it was liberal arts. Progressive in – I couldn't say I thought it was progressive, ultimately, I thought it was open. I was thrilled to find out there were no distribution requirements. I think that just excited me to be on if I'd signed on the dotted line and the check was in. But I didn't – I assumed it was going to be a continuation of what I had been exposed to growing up. And that's exactly what it was to me. It was just a lot of – you know, obviously more choices and a broader range but I stuck – I was traditional anyway; I knew I wanted to be a doctor, though I don't do that. (laughter; overlapping dialogue; inaudible) I play one on TV. It's that kind of concept, but I didn't – it was a chance as any – I thought any college was the [00:05:00] opportunity to explore. I think once I got here I realized there was such a difference – where my brother and sister had gone and what Brown offered at the time.

KSC: In a similar vein, I was very naïve about what the curriculum was at Brown and the New Curriculum, I hadn't heard that term until I got here. And I feel very lucky that it was here (laughter; overlapping dialogue; inaudible) place. In fact, I knew, coming to Brown, I wanted to study computer science. But again, I came here because it was convenient, and it turns out it's an incredible computer science curriculum and it's been the best choice I ever made for the career I now have. Lucky.

KMR: Also, in the year that we came, Brown was not – inside, I think Brown really recognized how groundbreaking the open curriculum was. But there weren't that many graduates outside

yet, who were talking about it and explaining what an advantage it was, so I don't think there was that much information out there; whereas, now, I know because look – you look at the kids who are coming in and the way Brown talks about it, it's much more [00:06:00], I think, a strong selling point and it articulates it much more than it did. So, I think I knew about it coming in, but I don't – I think – I had any idea as to how beneficial it would turn out to be. And then I did use it, I actually – I did appreciate the fact, coming in, that it wasn't going to be as challenging as Yale. I remember distinctly this 36 credits that Yale required and that Brown allowed only 28. But, as I progressed in the four years, I did drop classes, I did take things in areas that I would've never taken, because I was very cognizant of not having that pressure to do it. And I don't know about other people.

FL: My view about the New Curriculum, I think it was a s– a very strong selling point for me. I came from a school that was sort of very flexible, and so I was expecting to have a lot of choice and I was really grateful to find that there was infrastructure in place to try and help you, you know, with the – I guess we were [00:07:00] assigned to a faculty member when we first came and then we had the – got the residential counselors and the minority peer counselors and I thought that was really helpful.

SG: Yeah, I don't know – again, I don't exactly remember how I knew about it, but I think I did know about the – Ira Magaziner – I remember (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). But I also – I went to a big, big public high school which was okay. And actually my biggest shock was getting to – moving onto my freshman hall and meeting all of these people who had been incredibly well-educated in high school. I had a very good education in terms of a social education and a diverse education, but I – like, I never heard of the classics, really. And so to meet people who had studied Greek, I took my first semester, I guess for me the beauty of it was in a way, I always think of my first semester. I took Greek tragedies, and astronomy, and, you know, political science classes, something else, and just this feeling like you've just, kind of – joining this new world of – kind of [00:08:00] intellectual world, that I hadn't quite had in high school.

JL: Is this the difference between public and private education?

KSC: I think so. I went to public school. I had the same exact feeling that I felt very ill prepared. Not in the science and math curriculum, but in more language arts, English, history, all that felt very behind coming from a public school education.

JHC: I agree. I had the same experience. Went to a small public high school, there were 50 kids in my class, I don't think my high school even offered calculus, you know. I mean, it was really – and I came in there, I remember a friend who had gone to a private school talking about a five paragraph essay or something really basic, and I was so embarrassed. I had never done that before. I mean, I really – I was so unprepared for Brown, but it was incredible because of the curriculum and because, I think, what the curriculum made Brown into, was this place like a candy shop: Oh my gosh, there's all this stuff you can do and you can do it any time you want. (laughter) It was incredible. It just (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). It was so much fun. And so I had to scramble [00:09:00], I think, to catch up in a way, but –

KMR: I'm interested in that because I have friends who teach in universities now, and they say that the current thing is to take more kids who may not have had as well – as good a preparation in high school for diversity – not so much just in terms of racial or ethnic backgrounds, but also in educational backgrounds. And so they actually have instituted a lot more help writing, and they find that it's a big challenge versus even 10, 15 years ago, the discrepancy in writing. Did Brown have something to help you or did you just know –

JHC: I don't remember that – I just learned from friends –

KMR: – from trial and error?

JHC: and going, like, residential counselors. I remember just sort of tapping into professors, going to professors' office hours. I – it was more that. So I learned as I went.

SG: I also took – I had (inaudible) high school newspaper so I actually learned how to write in high school, and I (inaudible) just a great English teacher, but I [00:10:00] remember taking

Dean Sheridan's writing class, she had a small class. And also for me, she – I was telling my kids this morning – she was one of these people, like, I think she could read Greek and she knew philosophy. And I just, again, it was like I didn't know anybody who knew about those things, so (laughter) it was thrilling. Like, and it still, it's like, you know, even though now I'm a law professor, I still find – you know, I walk pass the library that has all the philosophers' names on it – and I know a lot about philosophy now, but I still find – I remember that feeling coming to Brown and getting introduced to it all.

JL: Did any of you come from private schools?

ATM: (raises hand)

KMR: (raises hand)

JL: You two. So how was this experience then, you – were the things you –

ATM: I felt the same. I don't know. I came, I was used to that five hours of homework. And, we wrote – my school was very strong in writing. I was a science person – math and science – but we wrote and we had to write essays, I remember, in math class. I'd never – write about math – you know, it was that kind of thing. But, I didn't find that transition difficult. The choices were out there, but [00:11:00] I – I'd gone down this very – what I thought was a traditional path, where I was heading, so I knew what I wanted to do. It was nice to see what I could supplement it with. Though, no a– no apparent distribution requirements are – you know, as we all know around here – it's still built in so that you're not just solely on year one, I mean it was fun to take the philosophy course, or you know, I love languages so I took some classes there, and astronomy – you know, rocks for jocks, we all know that (laughter). (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) one of those things, but it was really – and that was the year – it was not a gut course, it was a real hard course. And so, I remember learning a lot and now, you know, when we travel, on the deck, kids, you get to talk about plate tectonics and the shifting and things that you remember that – I can't say that I found it – I – it was just more of what I was used to. I didn't –

JL: You call this “rocks with jocks”?

GROUP: Geo one. Geology one.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JHC: It was great, that was a fabulous course.

ATM: Loons for dunes was the other.

SG: I loved that [00:12:00], [mega tau?].

KMR: My experience on private school issue – I found also that this – the change may not have been as dramatic as what some other people were speaking of in terms of the craft of writing. However, it was the thinking that took it to a whole new level. I took reli– a reli-stu, religious studies class my first semester. In addition to that things I thought I was pretty good at, like languages and other things, and I remember writing my essay and I thought I had my five paragraph essay and it was all very clear and well crafted, and he just – he gave me a C minus. And, it was my first grade at Brown (laughter), and I thought, oh my god. I’m like, what’s wrong with it? And I realized that I just wasn’t thinking deep enough. It wasn’t the craft, it was the – what comes before that. And it really blew me away, that I had to learn to challenge myself in a new way.

ATM: I had the opposite. But I had to challenge [00:13:00] the professor that was teaching me, and had to fight for my – freshman year, I’ll never forget that – I had to fight for my grade. And we ended up going to the head of the department to talk about my opinion on an – on my paper. And she disagreed with it. And I said, “This is valid you” – she gave me, at that time, an F, and I was really angry. And I said, “This is unfair.” And I said, “I’ve done everything, I’ve built my argument,” and we actually took it to the head of the department. And I prevailed. So that was nice.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

KMR: I had a similar – on my C – I remember going in and saying, “There’s something wrong here.” And I wonder, because we’re the two private school kids, if there was something about that where you thought it didn’t seem so unusual to be able to go and talk to your teacher and confront them when you thought there was something that seemed unusual.

JL: That’s interesting. So the rest of you, were you being challenging in your freshman year?

KSC: Challenging to our professors?

JL: Yeah.

KSC: No. (laughter) [00:14:00] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) I was challenged, but not in challenging my professors.

JHC: Well see, I remember, the only thing I would challenge was when there was – I don’t think I remember what class it was now, but I really wanted to be in a particular class and I just kept going and I didn’t – I kept showing up and I got into it. Finally she said, you know, great. And I just kept coming and coming and she – I think it was Nancy Dunbar, actually, and she was wonderful. I thought, “okay, that works!” But the only – that’s the only time I ever pressed it, I think, saying I really want to be in this class. I really want to be in this class and I just kept showing up.

SG: I did go to office hours, like I loved that (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) office hours. And what I found was actually some of my most favorite professors – this was a little bit later on – were not necessarily the most social. So you sort of walk into the office, and they, like, “Oh, what are you doing here?” But I – I – but I do remember going to see, I think it was Robert Bro– or no, professor Bray my astronomy teacher and just thinking wow, like, I’m talking to this guy who really knows a lot about [00:15:00] astronomy. So again, it was a little bit – this feeling of

walking into an intellectual world and having a sense of these professors who just knew so much and had so much depth and breadth about things that I was only beginning to learn.

KSC: You know, I was talking to a professor of mine last night at the class dance. And we realized he was sort of my age when he was teaching us – then. And it’s like, he – I still have him on such a pedestal, such knowledge, and that whole thing of – of he’s a professor. And, he was just a guy. (laughter) A Really smart guy, but he was just a guy, same age as I am now – as we are.

SG: Well it’s (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) now that I’m a professor and I see the students from the other side (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). Like, yeah, I’m just me. (laughter)

JL: But, you said you were in the computer science. Can you tell us something about that?

KSC: Sure. Well, first of all, I wanted to study computer science simply because it was going to be a good career path for me. Grew up with very little disposable income in my family, and my father said you’re good at math and science. Look what you can do with your career if you studied computer science. It’s the future. [00:16:00] I said okay. And my high school did not have any computers. So I came to Brown without having ever touched a computer, (laughter) saying I want to study computer science. And – Frances and I were talking about – CS 11, which is the meter course (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). And –

FL: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) An unforgettable class. I thought it was the best class I took here and I’m not a CS major.

KSC: It was really intense and it was the kind of thing, it was going to make or break you kind of – kind of thing. And I stuck with it. And I didn’t do all that well, but I stuck with it and, you know, eventually ended up TA-ing and became a head TA for the class and all sorts of things. So it was a very challenging curriculum starting off right from the get-go, all the way through. But there was such support in the computer science department, especially for undergrads. They have certain grad students around too, but the head of the department at the time, Andy van Dam,

who's still here, he was such a supporter of undergrads. And, I didn't realize it at the time, but he was very blind to gender. [00:17:00] He was equally supportive of men and women. And, being in high tech now, we are such a minority as women, and to have that grounding is just incredible.

And one thing I'll just mention – it's just interesting talking to a group of women – when I was – when we were at Brown, about one-third of the computer science graduates were women. And so we were a minority, but it wasn't too bad, there were a lot of women in classes and around. Now, the nationwide average for computer science graduates, only 18 percent are women and what the challenge is, then in the workforce, or in the – the professors that are teaching it, there are fewer and fewer women, so there are less role models, so it becomes self-fulfilling prophecy. And the only challenge with that is then you have men designing all the software and everything that we, then, as women have to use or whatever. And it's just not – we need diversity to create good solutions. And, so I – I – it's something I've – I'm very passionate about and I'm focused on, in my current job, too, is to see what we can do to support women, continuing to study this discipline.

JL: That actually brings [00:18:00] me to one of the things I was interested in (inaudible) because I was reading year books and the BDH [*Brown Daily Herald*] and such. There seem to be a lot of racial, gender, and sexuality issues going on in the early '80s. Would anyone like to start the conversation?

JHC: Yeah, I remember the fraternities were a big issue. And that – with Toad Hall, that was an issue, frater– there were a lot incidents –

Q: There was one – one fraternity –

JHC: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) Delta Tau was banned. But then by our senior year, Fi Del I think had been banned. The fraternity – so that male female dynamic on Wriston Quad was not good.

ATM: Well just Wriston Quad in and of itself still is very segregated since higher – I remember coming and I'd never seen that. If you walk, you have all places, you know, but I wasn't led or

raised, because, you know, I was raised in a very kind of, you know, everybody's the same [00:19:00] situation, so when I came here and saw all the white frats had homes on Wriston Quad, it is still the same. And there wasn't a single frat, you know, definitely African American frat, at all represented there and I found that strange coming here from a home of – with African American people in it. (laughter) You know, my father was a member of a fraternity; my mother was a member of a sorority which, I did not pledge, but I found that very odd here on campus. And I – all this segregation was bizarre to me. And I remember going to Wriston Quad – I'm not a drinker – and I thought that was insane. And I thought I was better off leaving (laughter) because it wasn't –

Q: (laughter) You were.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ATM: It wasn't – You know what I mean? I went to (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) [Psi?] and a couple parties there. And my roommate at the time – she's great – and she would come to step parties that were held with the African American frats and vice versa. We would – we would kind of go back and forth between each other's parties but I remember thinking this is really sad. And there was some incidents. There was a girl – I'd forgotten about –

JHC: A visiting student, I think.

ATM: At the time, where she – [00:20:00] before coming to Brown – there was a bottle thrown, and it hit her. And her stipulation – she accepted – she was accepted to Brown – and the stipulation was that the person who threw it – it was a guy from a frat – would not be here, and he was here when she arrived. And that started it. I think that was the beginning of the entire tension that I remember on campus. And it escalated. I remember being a part of – Did you do?

FL: I think there were a lot of different protests. And I just came from touring the Third World Center and I just remember. And they have pictures of it, so – There were Asian American admissions issues on campus. There were issues with financial aid when we were on campus, I

remember that. I remember there was a takeo— we sat in at the Maddock Alumni Center. I can't remember why now. (laughter) I do remember sitting there and I had to — and I — I had an obligation, I had to go to a Booz Allen welcome party for summer associates. So I remember going to the Maddock Alumni Center, saying, "I have to leave now [00:21:00], I have to go to New York," (laughter) and then being arrested by campus police. (laughter) So —

ATM: Remember the takeover at John Carter Brown Library?

GROUP: Yes. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ATM: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) [testing?] that, right there with that — the papers. The John Carter Brown, the slave trade papers. The university would not acknowledge that he actually traded slaves. And that was a big issue, somebody had gone and wanting to see them. And they were denied.

Q: Oh really?

ATM: Yes. They were not allowed to see them — it was a student. And that started it — well, why can't I see it, this is a matter of history. And then they said, you know, there was a lot of, I don't know, passing the buck around. And then finally, escalated to the point of what you're trying to say is that the school was not founded properly, and the question, of course, the rings that are now missing — I checked up a— I don't remember the— other side, close to it. They had a — what they claimed are the horse rings to tie a horse up to and other people said, "No, that's where you tied your slaves." I'm not sure if there still on — do you know up on the cobblestone street on the other side next to the John Carter Brown Library?

Q: Oh they were for horses, come on.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ATM: [00:22:00] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) It was either, so they were saying, you know, horses, but they were attached into the stone. And it's a piece of iron. It's a ring. The horse one was generally larger, and this was a smaller ring. And the rumor was that that was where people would tie their slaves. I don't know, I was like, really, I have to go study. And there's a point – there's a point you just don't have time. (laughter; inaudible). You don't have to pass, and there's nothing lower than a C. (laughter) So, that was my constant mantra in my head. But it was a real awakening for some people, a stirring, a call to action for others, or the complacency –

KMR: I found it interesting because I did notice that there were lots of different groups that were really trying to promote their identity whether it was racial or national or gender specific. And –

Q: Or religious too.

KMR: Or religious. Yeah, I mean, there were – the Hillel House, and I remember a women's group [00:23:00] – there was a –

KMR: Sarah Doyle Center and African American group, and a – I think there was a Third World Transition week. And all these things. I grew up in San Francisco. So, I kept thinking, what's the big deal. I mean, why does everyone need to sort of promote it? We're all – we're all open to everybody. But, I was actually the minority who thought that way. And it's the opposite of these people I met, who grew up in these – in Republican communities in Connecticut, who, for them, that was all new, coming into a – seeing different kinds of groups of people, whereas I thought it was just odd because I grew up where, you know, everything was free and hang out and there'd been a lot of rallies when I was young in – you know, the early '70s in San Francisco, peace rallies, and Vietnam rallies. So, I didn't think it was any big deal to it. And yet it – it was here. So, it clearly – that made me realize that it wasn't [00:24:00] – that San Francisco was not reflective of the rest of the country. (laughter) I still have a hard time recognizing that.

SG: I think it was also partly the time – there was the divestiture movement that was starting. Like, I remember at graduation I wore an anti-Apartheid thing on my gown. But there was also a

big no nukes movement and some students were suspended for – for protesting when Raytheon was here, I think.

Q: The CIA. When the CIA came to (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) –

SG: The jabberwocky thing –

Q: Jabberwocky was – that was our freshman year –

SG: I remember participating in Take Back the Night marches and Barbara Tannenbaum being very influential – I'd taken a public speaking class that she had. And, I wasn't out then. I mean, I didn't actually know I was gay then, but I remember there was a – sort of a nascent student – gay student group and they had a big pink triangle on campus that got knocked down at one point. And there was a lot of graffiti and all of this. I remember a friend of mine, a good – she's a good friend now, I knew her a little bit then – who's African American and lesbian. And I remember this letter she wrote to the BDH [*Brown Daily Herald*] [00:25:00] about sort of being a member of these three kind of oppressed minority groups here on campus and what that experience was like for her. And it was really, really – not fantastic. I mean she didn't come back to the reunion. I was nudging her, but it's – so it's – so, I think, sort of where you were positioned and partly where you grew up and how shocking it was to be in a – in a place like this. And, in a way, I think, even though I grew up in a very racially diverse community, but not a – not San Francisco. I hadn't really met so many, kind of, people from conservative republican, all white communities, so that was also kind of a surprise. And I think, I mean, to me that was part of the college experience too then, getting on freshman dorm and meeting people who are coming from all over the place. It was very eye-opening.

PR: I think I was shocked because, like I said, I came from this all-white town and I was – I think I was like the only Jewish person there. You know, so, I came and I just had this very naïve [00:26:00] – my parents are very liberal, I don't know why we were there – but I had this naïve idea that I would was going to come to this place and it was just – everyone was going to be friends. And then I was sh– like, I was so naïve – but I was like shocked that, you know, it was

so segregated. You know? And, I was involved in this really terrible incident at the *Herald*, do you remember?

Q: Yes, I do.

PR: And –

JL: What was the incident?

PR: I actually haven't talked about it, but it – and it ha– it still haunts me. We had this arts magazine – this is – And we had a – there was an artist who did a cover for the magazine. And I remember, I was closing the issue with Steve Johnson and it was a picture of a – what's the name – Russo. Russo, the guy who did all the jungle paintings and everything. He took the painting and – we had an issue about Steve – Steve and I had gone to the zoo and wrote this story about going to the zoo. And John Song [00:27:00], who wasn't a white guy, or whatever. He did this art and we closed the issue and put it to bed. And the next morning we were, like – you – the African American – what was it called, the Third World Center, I guess – marched out to *Herald* because the character – there was an African man in the painting and he was behind the fence that it had been painted on for the art of the zoo. So he looked like he was in the zoo.

ATM: I recall that one.

PR: And, it was so devastating. And we had these meetings because the *Herald* was all white, you know. And we had these me–

KSC: That wasn't your intention – the art.

PR: But that's part of the problem, right? The society – you don't see what we're doing. Do you know what I mean? I was – I remember I was so freaked out and I'm so – we were all so upset. And we had these major meetings and we sat down, the Third World Center and the *Herald*. And there was all kinds of talks and there was protests, and I just remember we tried this whole

initiative to – [00:28:00] to get more people of color on the *Herald* but, you know, I realize that, you know, they had a much more focused agenda and it wasn't going to be through the *Herald*. There's no way that we could integrate that newspaper. And, I went ahead and I took these Afro. Am. courses and, you know, it was not a happy experience. You know, I remember sitting in the class and really coming out much angrier than when I was when I didn't know anything. And I can't – you know, it was this whole journey. I think it was senior – junior year. Must've been junior year? I don't remember, but, it chang– it – when I came out, you know, I ended up living in a town that, you know, is much like Brown, but is still segregated. Even though it's a diverse town, it's completed segregated and I don't see anything's changed.

SG: Can I say one thing that I also remember along those lines which, probably, was one of the most intense learning experiences I had, was a black [00:29:00] Jewish dialogue that we had. Did anybody else do that?

ATM: I think I may have. (laughter) I did a lot of these.

SG: It was – I don't even remember what year it was, but it was just – it was, like, groups of people getting together with – and it was v– you know, any – and I think like what you said, I mean, it was at that time in the '80s where it was raw, right. I mean there wasn't, I think, a lot intellectualization around it as much as just emotion and eye opening, figuring out. Maybe that was just, you know, by virtue of being in our late teens and twenties. But I think it was also a certain beginning of identity politics in a different kind of a way and it was – I feel like it was sort of this twenty-four hour thing where we were together, you know, most of the night and then the whole next day and it was – again, it was one of those – I think for me at Brown there were a lot of, kind of, particular experiences that I had that were life changing –

Q: Yes.

SG: – in those kinds of ways. We also had this committee on the status of women, which is a totally different thing that was at – which I remember – do you guys remember Dean Thomas, Charlotte Thomas at all? So [00:30:00] she w– I think she chaired that committee and I – so for

me it was also exciting being part of an administration committee. And I think the president would come to it sometimes. And we organized a big thing where professors did – several different women professors talked about being a woman faculty member. And I guess, I mean, I had organized things before but that was kind of a bigger deal organizing a thing where the university printed the invitation and I remember stuffing all the mailboxes. And just, as it turned out, we had wanted kind of a diverse array of faculty which we thought that they also turned out – which wasn't our intention so much at the outset – to be diverse in terms of age. So we had just, you know, from a junior faculty member to somebody very senior. And it was – that was also kind of thrilling, to feel like the university was recognizing that this was important, threw a lot of resources into this event. You know, like, with many of these things, I can't actually remember what was said, but I remember the feeling of participating and kind of getting empowered by doing something with the administration.

JL: Was this towards the end or after the settlement to the Lamphere case presumably?

SG: That was – yeah, which – it actually happened, I think, [00:31:00] before or early in the – before we got here?

JL: Yes.

SG: Right. Yeah. The anthropology (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JL: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) Brown had a consent decree –

SG: Yes.

JL: – which –

SG: This is part of the amelioration of the (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JL: Yeah, around about your time, they consent decree was mitigated, was stopped, whatever the legal term is, maybe a little bit later, but they were – I'm sure that commission was part of –

SG: Yes. I'm sure.

JL: – the Lamphere case.

FL: Was that one linked to the women peer counselors because I think that was instituted during our time, too.

SG: I don't actually think so because I think the Lamphere case was really about faculty. But I think it's also part of the same issue, like, they just – lack of awareness that they (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

KMR: I also noticed the gender issue in sports. I played volleyball. And, women's volleyball was always on the edge of being a varsity sport. It – will it, won't it, will it, won't it – and there w– it was a big funding issue. And, it was right after Title IX, which my mother hadn't been [00:32:00] able to play a lot of sports in her generation and she kept saying you know, you're so lucky to be able to play varsity sports in college because it's a federal statute and yet the volleyball funding was always, like, on or not. And we would watch the boys' teams have bigger vans and better trainers and more access to the gyms. And we were always scrambling, you know, trying to stay at friends' houses before a big tournament, you know. And I really remember thinking, this isn't fair. We grew up with all these rights. It's federally mandated and people are still trying to pretend it's not that way and let people get away with. And we really – I remember having to fight very hard. And now I look at it and the facilities and the support seems to have changed a lot, and then I hear in the back – back corridors that actually they're thinking still again of maybe the volleyball might go as a women's varsity sport, and thinking what is that, [00:33:00] 25 years later, haven't we figured anything out.

ATM: When we came in, that was the case, was the whole Bob Thorne case – for existence with what was happening. I know when I came I had no clue that had had happened and she was here.

We didn't have – our African American – it was a studies. It wasn't even a department. So your existence was denied. As a woman of color, a black woman here, really? What was the point of that? Sports? Didn't have time, just my own path of study. I remember thinking, I left an environment where I knew who I was, I was very strong with who I was. And I came to something that was just absolutely not that, where I had to fight just to say I'm alive. And I –

Q: Interesting.

ATM: – I reared back. And I remember coming – it may have been this building or (inaudible) – I'd been invited, I was a minority peer counselor and then I ended up, senior year, co-chairing it with a gentleman and I remember thinking – she sat down, she said, “Well, what about why aren't there more African American women involved in the Sarah Doyle Women's Center.” [00:34:00] And I said, “Well, what issues do you want to talk about?” and I – you know, we started talking and how to further integrate it and (inaudible) voices and other ethnic groups coming in. And I said, at the end of the day, though, the question comes down to – and she said, “Well. here's a question for you.” I'm thinking okay, and I'm game for pretty much anything because it doesn't bother me. Usually. She said, “If we have to choose between being a woman or being black, what would you do?” And I said, “And right there is the crux of the problem.” I remember thinking – and I thought and we are (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) and we're both graduating. And I said, “The question is why do I have to choose? And she said, “What do you mean?” And I said, “Why don't I ask you the same question?” And she was shocked. She said, “Well nobody's going to ask me that question, that's a silly question to me ask me.” And I said, “So your four years at Brown have been productive.” That's all I could say to her. I thought there's nothing left. I remember thinking, to my – you know, I'm wondering, I don't know who she is, I hope – she's probably here, I don't know what her life's turned into – and I thought, wow four years [00:35:00] of a liberal arts education and we're still struggling and this is – it will continue and that was the saddest but also the reality of what I was leaving to go into. And I thought, this is – it's been interesting, I don't know. Did you do the Raise Awareness Communication exchange program?

FL: No, I did Third World Transition.

ATM: Yeah, I did that before I came, there's a whole workshop that went with that and it was trying to co– better relations between and I remember sitting in there and a lot of it was listening. And a gentleman at the time – who was it – on a sports team – to my face, like, my goal – there was somebody facilitating it outside – decided to let me know of his extreme hatred of people of color and called me the N word and I was, like, well that's fascinating. And this was a workshop that went on over weeks. And I listened and we each discussed it. And I was shocked he came back. I'd never –

JL: Who was this person?

ATM: He was here; he was a student here.

Q: And he was a Third World (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ATM: No, no, no. He was – no, he was at – he attended the communication exchange [00:36:00]. So he was part of a sports – and I want to say, like, a football player? Maybe? I don't know. Something (inaudible) wrestling –

KMR: Stereotypical of you. (laughter; overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ATM: It was, it really – that was a bad stereotype. But he was – he was in sports and very, very – you know, he came from a closed community, he did not think people of color belonged here, we were all here – oh, it – it got very deep and he was very upset. And as a counselor, I sat and I was like, well that's fascinating, and it was part of our, you know – counselor hat started to tip off – and I thought, well listen, and he listened. He came back. It went off, like an eight-week time period. And by the end, he was just weeping that he felt this way. It was the most extraordinary change in a human I had ever seen like that. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

Q: This is wonderful.

KMR: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) In many ways I think that that's –

ATM: Yeah, it was great. And that's where I thought –

KMR: The fact that he went to those meetings –

ATM: He came back –

JHC: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) kept coming back.

ATM: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) I guess he thought he could just insult me to the point – And I thought this is really – you know, I'm glad this moderator is here because I don't know how calm I was going to stay. It was really – it really was fascinating to hear what's at the crux of it. The fear, the – you know. And I thought [00:37:00] nowhere else are you safe to do that, truly, on a college campus. I think, in particular, here where things are really – it's taken to heart, I mean where else can you take over buildings and still assume that you're going to get your degree? (laughter) I don't – I don't know any.

FL: I think that's a really important point you just made, because you're right. Now that we're out of school, there's no safe professional place for you talk about that. We have all these diversity initiatives at work, but really, your job's on the line. You can't really be as honest as if, you know, you do it during college. And I think that is wonderful. I remember sitting through Third World Transition Program. It was really painful. It was really questioning, like, what is – how do you people look upon you. It was really – and then people would talk about, oh just be careful because there are KKK people here, you know. I grew up in New York City, I didn't, you know, know anything about that really. So, I think, you really helped me realize that was such an important part. Like, it was a safe place to explore, and where do you find [00:38:00] future safe places? Like, I have nine-year-old boys. Where do I help them find places like that?

JL: That's interesting because Peg was saying that you have this learning experience by going to the – some African American history or culture courses. And you two say that you learned a

great deal in this safe place; or, it was painful, but you learned a great deal. But, it doesn't sound as though the rest of you had to confront these things.

JHC: I think, I was really naïve. I'm listening to you all talk. I grew up in a small town. My pa—my family didn't have money. I had to work a lot at Brown. I worked a lot of hours here. And I remember it being freshman year, friends would go out to dinner, you know, come to dinner. Like, I can't, I can't pay you back. Like, I couldn't join in like that and so it — for me, it was this — and I can't it was a struggle because I loved it here, I had a great time. So I didn't feel like I was missing anything, so much as feeling like there [00:39:00] was some— all these people had experiences that I hadn't. Like, I wasn't as prepared; I'd be in an art history class and a slide would show up and it would be some museum in Germany and oh, like, everyone had been there. I've been on Cape Cod (laughter; inaudible). And so this whole — for me, I really was so naïve. Like, I wasn't dealing with all that stuff. I was dealing with my own, getting to the Blue Room at 7:00 a.m. and I'm working with Howard and Billy and Norman, I mean it's really — my exp— so I'm realizing so much of my experience actually is related to people who worked here, whereas — in the Blue Room. So Howard — Howard Hughes was there and I used to — I was a cashier, and he'd bring me his — his name's Howard Hughes — and he'd bring me his two \$20s every morning and I'd change it into one-dollar bills. He liked to have a big, big bill roll in his pocket. And Norman Turner who ran the Blue Room was so wonder— people were so wonderful to me in that way. And worked at the liquor store on Meeting Street. And so I saw a lot of professors coming through in the morning to get their coffee and in the afternoon (laughter) buying some beer on the way home. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) Wait a minute. Where — didn't I see you — [00:40:00]

So for me, Brown was a really different experience in that way. So, I look back and I remember that all going on and I don't know if that's because of things I'd read afterwards or whether I was a part of it, but it was — my world was very different, particularly the very beginning was more economic.

KSC: So, I feel very similar to you in that I was — I'm aware of all these things, I remember this, but it was a level removed. I was so busy. I mean, computer science is an 80-hour-a-week — the equivalent of an 80-hour-a-week job, you know, whatever that was in college. But it was — there

were – just weren't enough hours in the day and I was on financial aid and had to put myself through school. And so I was working as well. And, I just – I really felt like I didn't have time to do protests. And that's – I mean, I don't mean to say that you had the luxury of it, but –

FL: I was working too; I was on financial aid.

KSC: Okay. So I don't know – I guess my point is, I really felt I had to focus on paying the bills and studying. And I – yeah, I had friends and I went to parties and all of that, but it – I didn't have time to get involved with a lot of other things.

PR: And isn't that kind of what we're saying? I mean, I came from Philly; everyone went to Amherst, you know. And I was [00:41:00] supposed to go to Amherst and I didn't want to go to Amherst because it was a continuation of everything I didn't want. And I feel like, that's the beauty of Brown, is that if you don't want to go to Wriston Quad – like, I never went to Wriston Quad. It disappeared, I don't ever think of people (laughter; inaudible). You know what I mean, like, whatever. It's like New York, like, I never go to Wall Street so it doesn't exist to me. You know, or, unfortunately, now it exists to us, but – you know, we all have these – at the same wonderful place where – you know, I was at the *Herald*. I did very little studying, you know, but it was my goal (laughter; inaudible) newspaper and that was my life. And, we were all here. And it's not like being at Williams or Amherst, where it's like this tiny community and everyone's on a sport and it's everyone's in a frat and if you didn't you were just on the fringes. This – look at all of us.

ATM: I think that's also the status of it, that it can be compartmentalized. I mean, Frances was – you were like guys on aid and I couldn't – you know, just pay the bills and do studying – she had both [00:42:00] with the added pressure of having to fight for her struggle, her survival on campus. That should not – nobody should ever have to do that. To walk down the street safely, to get – I literally had to always call an escort service. Not just because I was a woman; I was a black woman. The fear that people thought that I was from – a local from the community. Even today – yesterday – I walked into the BDH and I had on the same neck tag that everybody else has on that says alum and I was approached to ask if I worked at the store. By a student. And I

thought, really. I could only think, really, where have we come to make that assumption where people can stay in their bubble. And I think that was the sadness, I thought you've wasted and squandered that.

I came from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a small town, where the integration was me. So, it was not abnormal for me to come and have that, kind of, way republican – I mean, like, this school was beyond – it's a conservative college prep school that I came to. Great education; was very, very conservative. Loved them dearly. Love them still to this day. Still talk [00:43:00] politics and choose to disagree, but we have those kind of – so I wasn't afraid of a conversations, clearly, because I've been having them ever since my childhood. When I came here, it was really people – I found it interesting that they never – they never saw it. I recall and remember that flag that – with the triangle being – I wept. I thought if that's endangered, what else isn't. My survival as a woman on campus. Women – rape rate was so high. I tho– I was petrified. I'd never felt that I couldn't – I didn't have the luxury of not being involved, because every aspect of that infiltrated my life, as a woman, as a person of color, as a person considered a minority, which I hate that phrase, I don't refer to myself that way. If they're going to do this to gay people, what are they going to do me as an African American person, and knowing I have gay friends here at Brown – and may even know that person you're referring to – spoke of. There's a lot of that.

There was a girl here, same thing. And she was biracial. There was a girl – you know, there were kids that were biracial. It was really fascinating, how could it not affect us [00:44:00], knowing we were going to go out into the world. I bought it hook line and sinker, the line – you know, you're going out in the world to make change. How could I not, if I didn't get involved, if I didn't know where – I remember that being gay, too, boy, people were freaking, and I thought, what's at the cause of this? Nobody's – I hope – the apology came out and I read it and I believed it. It was not intentional. It was like, great. Okay. Moving on. I did not know you had taken a course. It's fascinating to me. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

KMR: I think it's interesting too, because you – you know, you mentioned how the two of them because of your background took part in these. And you said you didn't have the luxury not to. And in that respect, it's very different. I have the luxury not to, but I did find it was really interesting. As I said, I came and I thought what's the big deal of all these differences and backgrounds, we're all together. It's really not a big deal. But the fact that it kept going, I did do

– I did dabble in a lot of it. I mean, I took – I took French, I took Spanish, I took Japanese history, I took Japanese, I took African American studies, I took religious studies, I took [00:45:00] all of these things to try to – Russian literature – all of these things, to try to understand how different people in different cultures saw themselves and communicated their cultural aspects across other spectrums. But, again, I wasn't involved in it personally. But I did – in terms of my self being on the line. But in terms of trying to understand all of these different groups that were trying to express themselves in a world that clearly didn't just receive them as themselves.

JL: One thing that people don't talk about very much is class. But that's what's coming out between a lot of things you're saying, is that people who are from working class backgrounds, or whose parents didn't go to college, probably had a very different experience from other people. I'm not sure what luxury they had to ignore it, or to just get [00:46:00] on with their work, but I think the class issue is something that is still quite important. Does anyone want to –

KMR: It's interesting because my father used to always – my sister went here. She was two years older than me. And she studied math and computer science. And my father would always say – we didn't see each other very much; she studied in the science library; I studied in the Rock. And he would always say, “I don't understand it, her friends' parents are truck drivers and have had all these real-life experiences; and your friends' parents are diplomats and bankers” and this and that. And I'd be like, “Why do you keep judging us because of who are friends' parents are, you know, it has nothing to do with our – how you interact with people on campus.” And yet, actually, in many ways, I realized it did, because we did end up – and I never knew if it was because of science library versus the Rock, or just the kinds of friends that we met. But it really did give us very different experiences [00:47:00] on campus.

PR: I mean, I've – we – I think that kids who were coming from working-class families weren't going to go and major in semiotics, in general. They were going, getting their med degrees or their engineering degrees, or whatever. And the kids that came from affluent families, a lot of the time, felt this margin to be able to study less practical –

JHC: It's interesting because I actually majored in art and here I am –

KMR: Yay!

JHC: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) I actually majored at studio art and I remember my father saying – and my parents didn't have money to help pay, so I had to pay for it on my own and take out a lot of loans and all that, so – But he felt very comfortable sharing his opinions with me (laughter) of what I should be studying. And so he kept pushing me to take economics, and accounting, and all these things, but it wasn't what I loved to do. And it think it was one of those things that I loved about Brown, was that I could pick what I wanted to do. And, for me, art was something that gave me energy, I loved to do it. And – but I knew when I graduated, I couldn't pursue it. Does that make sen– because I couldn't pay back my loan. I couldn't be an artist, unless I [00:48:00] got famous right away, which wasn't going to happen. But I knew that I needed a job where I got paid to pay back loans, to move on. And that was – I guess that just – that was fine. I knew that was what I had to do, and it sort of led me down this other path of becoming a college counselor. I worked in admission at Brown and I – I feel I have both now in a way. I just – very lucky in some ways. But it definitely imp– it absolutely impacted my choices post-Brown. I couldn't go to graduate – I just couldn't afford it, I couldn't do it. I owed too much. And – But I don't – I can't say I miss – I don't know, that's what it was. You just move on. You deal with it.

FL: I have to say, I'm very grateful for Brown for having [given me?] financial aid. Otherwise, I wouldn't have come here. So, I always try to donate because of that, because I hope that someone else with a working class background like me can come.

ATM: It's an interesting [00:49:00] experience, as in – I was not on aid. But the assumption was that everybody of color is on aid. And that was shocking to me. I was like, what. I mean, there's nothing – I came from a very upper middle class family. Very fortunate, you know, where I could've gone, you know – my parents were like, “Great, you're going to college. What are you going to do, you're the third, thank you, yay, get out the – you know, definitely get out of the house, we don't care where you're going, you know, you're” – I was the number three, so

they're like, "Bye!" And they sent us off. And they had no clue what I was going to study, none. Never asked it, never even – they were like, "Great, just get out." And it was at a party, I remember, midway through, that my father found out I was going into medicine, which is where he had been. And he was shocked. I was in chemistry; he was like, what. I said "[yeah, I'm a?] med major." He's like, really. And, really shocked. He thought – I said, "What did you think? What did you think?" My brother had gone a different route, and my father kept saying, with my brother, "What are you going to do with that, what are you going to do with that, [Nate?]" I think, he learned not to say that because my mother got him to be quiet. [00:50:00] And he was shocked. He thought I would do something very – probably philosophy, knowing him, you know. But he was stunned.

But getting, while I was here, that economic, the whole class issue you're speaking of, is really difficult for people to, I think, understand that we were – from everybody – some had never seen people of color, some had, you know, they had their one or two friends and they went to school, but where they went to school their friends were on aid and they were shocked to hear that I was not. So I – maybe that's why I grabbed the challenge of going in to tell a professor I really about – you know, what you think. You're going to teach me – or, your job is to te– I mean, I was kind of (laughter; overlapping dialogue; inaudible). But for no other reason than I came with the – the speech was, I think, when we came: this is your education; you're responsible for your (overlapping dialogue; inaudible); it's your responsibility.

KMR: You definitely felt the responsibility coming in here. And you have an advisor – my advisor wasn't really very helpful, so we really needed to –

ATM: You had to take charge of it.

KMR: Yeah, figure it out and –

FL: I found the senior – the senior, like, the people ahead of us, were much more helpful [00:51:00] giving advice.

KMR: The resident on the dorm, Paul, freshman year, was extremely helpful.

SG: I still – I guess I feel like, when I look back and – I wasn't unable to get – like, I went to a very economically diverse high school and very racially –

Q: Where did you grow up?

SG: I grew up in White Plains, so it was just – you know, whatever, a big, messy – big high school. But – And I think it – Brown actually really suited my personality because I'm a lot of the same way now. I was just kind of interested in trying everything, so – and, so it's, like, I did work sometimes be – not because I needed to for aid, but because I wanted some money, but it was also – but it was like, I – when you talked about studio art – I feel like, I loved taking art history and then going into List because I loved the smell of it. (laughter; inaudible) But seeing Kermit Champa's modern art class and, like, wow – you know, just – And it was – a lot of that for me in all of these different kinds of classes that I took, which were a little bit all over the map. I mean, I haven't looked – I have no idea where my [00:52:00] transcript is, but when I think about the kind of array of courses I took here – I mean, I don't think I was well-advised at all. I mean, and now that I'm an academic and I try to advise students, I think wow, it would've been useful, probably, to have some good advice. And I imagine that's better here now than it was. I mean, I felt like we were kind of out there –

Q: Yeah, I didn't get (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

SG: – on our own. And, my advisor was actually a – somebody who was a professor who I turned out to love and was very influential. But, you know, when I showed up in her office for advice, she was, like – you know, didn't know anything. So it's just – it's sort of interesting because you think you turn all these 18-year-olds over to college. And, the ironic thing, or the challenging thing about Brown, is you have a ton of choice. And, for me at least, it really wasn't complemented with advice. And my resident advisor was nice but also not very helpful. He may have been in sort of the computer engineering side, so he wasn't so helpful for what I was interested in. You know, and somehow – but that's part of the learning experience, too. I mean, I do think – and I think this about the Brown grads who I've run into [00:53:00] or who I'm still

friends with – it's people who have made their own way, and a lot of people have kind of created their own career paths and done all different kinds of things and I do think Brown both attracts that and then it fosters that because you, kind of, that's what you have to do to make it here.

KSC: To find your own major for the rest of your life, right? (laughter)

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JHC: I find that a lot of (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) so many alums I meet. But it's the life – the whole idea of lifelong learning. Take some classes, and learning new things, and that's what's so exciting.

KMR: I was talking to someone last night who was saying, it's interesting at the twenty-fifth reunion, because it seems like everyone's had a real life at this stage. You know, 5, 10 years out, you're sort of doing one thing, whereas now people have had ups and lows and ups again. And it's a real journey. And I know in my professional world, when I speak with headhunters, they say, oh you're such a Brown grad. (laughter) And I'm just like, well, you know, what does that mean. And they say well, you know, you guys just invent it as you go. You don't sort of take the [00:54:00] path well-traveled. You head out and go right and then you decide to go left and then you might right back to where you were, or you might find something new. And then I think, well hmm, maybe that's not really very good in the professional world, now it is that it's getting very conservative and people are looking for expertise. And I had the head of – the HR head of a former employer of mine say, I actually look for Brown grads because they know how to deal with the unexpected. And the world is unplanned. And things happen – you know, I mean, Google and Facebook didn't exist 10 years ago. And the economic crisis isn't foreseeable. And all kinds of things like that. And they find that, that – someone with those kinds of educations who do – who does know how to lead their life and – through trial and error, and reading the tea leaves of what's in front of them is very helpful.

JL: But then partly Brown students are a self-selected group because they want – nowadays anyway – they want to go [00:55:00] to this place with this looser, less structured curriculum. So, given to self-selection, they come out with that reinforced.

PR: But I also think – I mean, I interview these kids for college now, and every single one of them that walks through the door, they all say I want to go to Brown – the one thing that they've looked up, you know, that – (inaudible) [quick element?]. But I always – you know, I think it's a very – a lot of kids like that idea. Do you know what I mean? It sounds great, like, I don't have to take math. And I always say to them, it's good for some people, but this is not – so it's not like these other colleges are all idiots and they created these requirements. I mean, a lot of people need that. And, I don't – I think most kids think they don't want it. But I think you have to be a really – you have to have that shining light that's going to –

Q: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible), yeah.

PR: And [I actually?] through here or else you're going to sail through here and not do much.

Q: Right.

KMR: And I don't think it's all self-selected, I really don't, because I do the same thing, interviewing. And I see, sometimes, there are certain kids who are incredibly [00:56:00] bright, but they are maybe too focused in something, and they don't get into Brown, you know. They might be the best in their class, but they're very self-assured in what they want to do, and Brown says, you know, we're not sure you're the kind who's going to take care – take advantage of this education. So – and yet it's their first choice. So, in some ways, sometimes they're self-selected, and sometimes Brown, hopefully, has a pretty good view of the kinds of person that will take advantage of it.

JL: I know Suzanne has to go.

SG: The kid at f– dropping – getting dropped off at the (inaudible) at field day.

JL: But maybe –

KMR: They'll find their own way. (laughter)

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JL: Actually, before you go, I have a sort of follow-up question that partly came from what – something you said about someone you know who wasn't coming back although you tried to persuade her. And I'm thinking how it is that [00:57:00] some of you guys, whatever your happiness with some parts of the Brown experience – loved it, most of it – but there are some people who don't or didn't. Can you give me any insight from, you know, what you know about people who just cut ties with the place? What was their problem, if you know?

PR: People I know who have cut ties, though, sometimes it's not that they don't like Brown, it was an unhappy time in their life, or else their not keeping up – I think reunions are self-selected, you know, who's coming to a reunion. There aren't that many people that didn't like Brown, it was – it was it has more to do with their life.

SG: I think I would agree with that. And even my friend who didn't come back and hasn't come back to reunions, I think she was – she – I think she has a lot of fondness for Brown. I mean, I think it was tough and I think being an African American lesbian here during that time was a really tough position to be in, but I don't even think that she would say [00:58:00] – I think she wouldn't say she didn't – doesn't like it. She doesn't just sort of feel the same affinity. I also think – I agree with you in terms of reunions. There's just a certain segment of people who will go to reunions and a certain segment of people who will never go to reunions, but might still write a check.

ATM: It takes us, like – because if it's a painful experience of somebody I know who won't come back. It was hard. And from – they were underprepared, they felt they didn't have support, they felt they didn't have good friends, and they just never felt like they belonged. And some of

it, within our community – a subset of a subset of a subset – is how they felt. And they said I don't want to go back and feel not whole. And that – that's what really – I got that completely. I don't ide– I really don't identify with certain terms that people use left and right that are commonplace in society. I just have no use for those labels. And I literally don't – I don't care. Think of me what you want, that's your business. This person has not – [00:59:00] to come here renews that. Then they've moved on. I mean, obviously, we still talk. I mean, we're friends. But, I understood that. And it was a hard, hard road here for them. And I'm sorry, because I can't say that I – there are some, you know – but even within the African American community, I can't say that I fit in all the time, and I don't really care. I mean, I care, but I don't care. You know, where your life just sort of – but I wanted to come back and see and remember what I remember, do I remember it accurately, can I even remember any of it, you know. (laughter; inaudible) you know, faces, people change, but it's a really – depends on if you're – what you're involved in and professors and – and all of that. It's a really – was this the right place when you got here. Was this really where you were able at that time to take responsibility for your life. And, even if you weren't at 17, 18 when you entered, did you go through that process. And I think that's a harder (inaudible) [01:00:00].

JL: So before you totally (inaudible) off, does anyone have any final thoughts that should be part of what the future might know about the class of 1985?

SG: We were awesome. (laughter)

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JL: Awesome, yes. (inaudible)

KMR: I – you know, I don't have a sense of our class as a whole. I really don't. I look through the list of the people coming back from our reunion, and I felt like I knew maybe two names. As I look at faces, I (inaudible) recognize more, but I realize, as much as I felt like I dabbled in a lot of different things, that I probably didn't do as much as I would've liked to. I actually met my husband at Brown my last year, and so our life is actually very dominated by Brown, I have to

say. [01:01:00] Because my sister, and he's – on his side there was Brown as well. And so I think our Brown world sometimes feels very large and other times when I really think about it, it's actually very small. And I f– And so I try to wonder, you know, where – was I really living in a small world during my –

PR: If these parallel four years, or –

KMR: Right. Or was everybody else? Because I – I feel like I'm not really part of the central class. Part of the class.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

KMR: Yeah, so maybe that is the nature of our class or every class –

JHC: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) independent-minded people together, it's not a place where that's a everybody goes to the football game, or everybody goes – and that's what's beautiful about it actually in some ways, but – But perhaps in some ways, also, there were sacrifices because we didn't all have to be together. (inaudible) realize that we had – didn't have to work things out if we didn't want to, or, you know, so –

JL: Did any of you know each other? [01:02:00]

SG: Yes.

ATM: I knew Frances.

FL: Yeah.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

SG: (inaudible) I knew Suzanne.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JL: But not many. None of you knew everybody here.

Group: No.

KSC: Any people I knew, I – we don't keep in touch. I have – some of my best friends are from Brown. Actually, all my best friends are from Brown still. So, I mean, I – but it's just not this group.

(laughter)

KMR: On that note, kidding aside, do you find it is, no matter where I am, and we've lived around the world, if I meet someone from Brown, no matter what year they are, you can have – you can immediately get into a very interesting conversation. And maybe that's true with all topnotch schools because you're dealing with a certain intellectual person, and yet there's something, I think, very un-superficial about Brown people. That they – they're eclectic and they like to – you know, they might get crazy doing something [01:03:00] or they might be very intense doing something else, and yet they're very interested and curious. And I find that I can talk to a Brown, you know, graduate of class of 2010 in the same way a – as you get back into the old Brown when it was a single sex school they're a little bit different. (laughter), No, but they really are. They're a little bit different, but you know, there's something that you share in common.

JL: Okay. I will bring us to a close. Thank you, all, so much for doing this. Thank you, [Paul?]

GROUP: Thank you. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

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