

Transcript – Class of 1997, 25th Reunion

Narrator: Kavita Bali, Kathryn King Crowley, Stephanie Malia Sylvester Hom, Rebecca Kellar-Duke, and Danielle Solari Larouco

Interviewer: Amanda M. Knox, Pembroke Center Assistant Archivist

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Amanda Knox: Good afternoon, or good morning depending on where you are in the – on the continent. My name is Amanda Knox. I am the Assistant Archivist that the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women at Brown University. It is Monday, May 9, 2022. It is 2pm Eastern time and I am here with this year's 25th reunion group, class of 1997. Welcome. Thank you all so much for taking the time out of your schedules to be with me today and to share some stories as we look back at your time at Brown.

I'm just going to ask that we start by briefly introducing ourselves. Please feel free to share what you'd like; your names, where you're zooming from, perhaps what you're doing for work, or whatever you'd like. And I'll just kind of call on people because I know all of our screens look a little bit different so Katie would you mind getting us started? [1:00]

Katie Crowley: Sure. I'm Katie King Crowley. I am now currently the head hockey coach at Boston College and I am currently zooming from there.

Amanda Knox: Thank you. Danielle.

Danielle Larouco: Hello. So I'm Danielle Solari Larouco. I am in South Shore Massachusetts area and I work in hockey as well. I have a hockey business and I'm General Manager of three different rinks and the General Manager of the professional women's hockey team in Boston, Pride. So, still in hockey.

AK: Becky.

Rebecca Kellar-Duke: So, Becky Kellar. Former teammate of Danielle and Katie. And also [2:00] still in hockey. Zooming from Burlington, Ontario so just outside of Toronto. I do hockey development up here and started doing some work for Leafs TV, which is for the Toronto Maple Leafs and their farm team as well, the Toronto Marlies. So just started working in that a little bit. That's it. Can't get out of hockey.

AK: Thank you. Stephanie.

Stephanie Malia Hom: Hi I'm Stephanie Malia Hom. At Brown my maiden name was Stephanie Sylvester, and I am zooming from California, where I am a faculty member at UC Santa Barbara. I'm a professor of Italian. And at Brown I played the other hockey, field hockey, when I was there, so it's good to see everyone.

AK: And last but not least, Kavita.

Kavita Bali: I feel privileged to be in a company of such accomplished women. I don't know how I got invited to this group, but my name is Kavita Bali and I currently live in New York City I grew [3:00] up not too far from Stephanie in Lompoc, California, a very small town. So, came from a very small town to, to Brown and then to a very big city here. My work has always focused on women and girls. I started my career in public health and now work for a small family foundation.

AK: Thank you so much, again, I just want to reiterate how honored I am to be here with all of you today. This is really just sort of mind blowing for me that this is what I get to do with my time.

So, let's maybe start from the beginning of your time at Brown and I'm going to kind of offer it out here, feel free to jump in as you'd like. I won't call on anybody in case you don't, you don't remember or you don't want to remember. But let's start with why Brown? [4:00] What attracted you to Brown and why did you decide to come here?

DL: I'll start girls. All right. All right, so 25 years is a long time ago, so I don't know about these guys, but I'm not sure if I have quite the memory that, that I think I have, but. So, yeah, Brown is an hour away from me, where I grew up, and you know, education, obviously was super important and athletics was important, and you know, looking at, looking at different schools in the area, you know, New England area, Brown just had everything that I was looking for and you know, what I didn't know I needed and wanted they had as well. But you know, I have to give a lot of credit obviously to hockey and to the infamous Digit Murphy that got at least three of us there. Early on, I kind of met up with her and just followed, you know she followed me throughout my high school. And then Brown is actually the only [5:00] school I applied to. Applied early and got in. Thank you, Brown, for letting me in. So yeah, so that was kind of, kind of you know, and once I got there I fell in love with it. The city was, was, you know up and coming and it had everything academically that I was looking for, so. Very excited about my time at Brown and choice so that's my story. King.

KC: Oh. Okay, here we go. Yeah I mean mine is very similar to Danielle's. You know, was recruited by Digit and, and I knew I wanted to play two sports at Brown so that was definitely something that I was interested in and Brown allowed me to be able to do that as well. I also had the luxury of my parents were from Rhode Island, so they knew [6:00] Brown very well and my grandfather, at the time when I was, when I was at Brown, still lived in Rhode Island, so I was, you know being from New Hampshire, not that far away.

Loved the campus. I just thought it had a beautiful feel. And you know same thing as Daniel said, just a great school, we had great academics, great athletics. You're right near the city where you can go into the city and see Providence or stay in, you know, on campus and you felt safe on campus. And same, again, same as her, I'm just very happy that I went there and really proud of, proud of my time at Brown and everything that Brown gave me.

RKD: I can jump in next. So, same, same as both King and Darney, that you know absolutely loved it. And I had gone to a hockey camp and been recruited by Princeton [7:00] and Cornell also. So I did my first trip to, to Brown and I loved it. The head coach at the time and the girls that she had set me up with to take me around campus, it was just a great connection and made me feel very welcome.

And, and this is probably part of the story I shouldn't tell, but this is what happens when you're 18 years old. Then I went to Princeton and they were showing me around and they sat me down before they, they took me out and they said, "Oh you're from Canada, you must be a Toronto Blue Jays fan." And the Blue Jays were in the playoffs, they won the World Series that year. They put the Blue Jays game on and it happened to go into extra innings and just as extra innings started they changed the channel to the presidential debate and I said, "I'm not going here." So, anyways, you know the things that factor in when you're 18. But I just didn't get the same feel when I was on campus. And you know, Princeton's beautiful and they have great athletic programs and everything, but I just think it was sort of the personal connection I got at Brown and with the players that I was going to ultimately be playing with. And same as Kinger, I was a two-sport athlete [8:00] and the softball coach was very welcoming to me as well, so that was part of my decision so, hockey and Blue Jays.

SH: I can go. Hi I'm Stephanie again. Brown wasn't even on my radar until my sophomore year in high school. I actually grew up in Honolulu and you know the East Coast is a really exotic land that no one really talks about. I didn't even visit the East Coast until I was 16 years old and didn't see snow until I was 16. And in doing my, my, I was kind of a nerd in high school, so I took chemistry in summer school because I guess, I was kind of sadomasochistic in that sense, and my TA, this high school TA was going to Brown and he was telling me about the open curriculum. And at the time when I was thinking about college, I was thinking about the [9:00] West Coast only you know, because it was it was closer, I was familiar with it. And then, when I went on a college tour, I decided to go on the East Coast and look at all these other schools. And when I stepped foot on the Brown campus it was a cold March, windy, blustery day in Providence and I just thought, wow this, this feels right. And that was that. It was really a gut instinct in that moment on that college tour, so I applied the next year. Happened to start playing field hockey my junior year of high school just out of – I played soccer my whole life so it was a kind of an easy strategic transition – and ended up playing at Brown, first on the junior varsity team and then on the varsity team. So, my time at Brown was really about, I played field hockey, I was involved in the Outing Club or the Hiking Club which I ran for two years and did a lot of trips up to the White Mountains, [10:00] to Maine, and it was really fun.

And then my senior year I really concentrated more on academics, thanks to I wanted to write an honors thesis and I took this fantastic course with Charles Neu, the American Experience in Vietnam, not the big course undergrad course, but the senior seminar in which you know, he told us about these projects he was doing sitting down with you know the big players in, first the Cuban Missile Crisis and then in the Tet offensive in Vietnam. He brought together Robert McNamara and Kissinger and I was, wow this is how the past still applies to the present. And that kind of shifted my whole perspective and I think that was a pivotal moment in why I went into academia and, in fact, my research today really involves bringing the past into the present through history and anthropology, so I credit Brown with, with a lot of that.

KB: So much like Stephanie, [11:00] I was looking at schools on the West Coast, obviously in California there are a lot of state schools that are great options. And I got a flyer in the mail one day about a Brown summer program the summer before my junior year. And my father had come from very humble beginnings in India, and we have educators in our family and so education was really his ticket out of poverty and he won a Fulbright Scholarship and that's how he and my mother came to this country. In fact, it was announced on the day of their arranged marriage so she, she had a big surprise that day. And so he, when he first came to this country part of his orientation was at Brown and the other part was at Yale and that's how he kind of knew about it, and so he said, you know, "This is a great school, [12:00] you have to go." We didn't really have the means, but you know, he said, "We'll figure it, figure it out." And so I had the great fortune of going to a summer program junior year of high school and hit the, hit the lottery there with a class by Jean Marjorie Thompson, who was the head of the Biology Department at the time and she was not only a fantastic teacher, but an artist and musician and really just embodied I think what Brown is really all about. And that, you know that summer really sold me on the idea of coming to Brown and I applied and was lucky enough to get in.

AK: So now you are all, what? This must have been 1993 you were making these decisions? So it's '93, [13:00] you've decided you're coming to Brown. What are some of your first memories of your time on campus? Do you have memories of like move in day or like the first time you're just kind of plopped here and now you're Brown student?

KC: I remember moving into my room. I hadn't met these two yet, but my roommate was actually another two-sport athlete, Yamini Subramanian, yeah. Yeah, Stephanie would know her, she played lacrosse and field hockey. I think she stopped one of them at one point, but, and I moved in and she, I was like intimidated by her. She was like so smart I was, I was like she's so smart, she knows what she's doing, she knew so many people at, at Brown. I was like oh my gosh I don't know anybody, I, you know, she, I knew she had gone to Phillips Andover, like a really good school. And I was like, I don't know what I'm going to do here. Am I going to be successful? [14:00] Am I going to be able to do it? The whole thing. But she was awesome I, we ended up being roommates for three years and still keep in touch every once in a while. And, and it just, it, she ended up being so great that that it really helped ease any anxieties that I had while going to school. I remember one time, having a, getting a bad grade on like a paper that I had written and she was like, "I'll help you, don't worry, I love writing." And the whole thing, and she, she really eased my first couple of weeks. She really made it easier for me.

RKD: I can go. Yeah I think, you know, I had this idea that it was going to be so great to go away to school, but I think my first couple weeks were tough too because I was now nine hours away from home and I know it was tough at the start too, even [15:00] when the hockey season started, because my parents had always come to every game I ever played in either sport and so now all of a sudden they couldn't be at everything so it was definitely a little bit of a tough transition. But I think what eased it for me was one, my roommate was also on the softball team, Shana Advani, so that helped. And then meeting these guys who, at first I think we're all like hmm, am I going to like this person? Maybe, maybe not. But, as it turns out. It just made for a great four years and being a part of a team and, and just having that support system around. And I remember, you know we came early as freshmen and when the rest of the upperclassmen came in, one of our teammates Andrea Sproul had called us and said, "We're having a party. You know, this is where we live, and you know, you guys come on over you can meet everyone." And so my freshman roommate, she and I left for the party and we walked in circles. Completely got lost. Had to call her from a call box. And Andrea who said, "Hold on freshmen, do you mind I just have to," and she turned to the rest of the party [16:00] and announced, "the freshmen are lost!" And then they all had a good laugh. So I felt like it was sort of our, you know, that's what you get when you're when you're a freshman. That was sort of our initiation a little bit, but it

was, it was a nice way to start to right away be welcomed into this whole group of women who could, could help you out and, and direct us so we didn't get lost on the way home, so.

KB: Well, I also felt like I was really far away from home. My parents weren't able to drop me off, so I showed up at T.F. Green with my two non-wheel-able suitcases and – what an innovation wheeled suitcases are, right? And I struggled to get them to, to campus, but finally made it and walked into my pre-renovated Andrews Hall room. I hear it's very [17:00] nice now. And met my roommate. And I came early for another program, the Third World Transition Program, which was for people of color to have some time together before the rest of the students came on campus. And again, as I mentioned, I came from a very small town, I was the only South Asian, you know, child in my school all throughout, and coming to this program where I met lots of other South Asians, as well as you know, people from all walks of life, was extremely eye opening. And it just, you know, I think what I, what, you know, what I learned at Brown is that you know it's not what you learn it's, it's sort of how you learn. And you know, [18:00] the education is obviously you know, wonderful, but it's, it's those experiences and learning about life that really changed my view on the world.

SH: Yeah, like Kavita, I also came early, both for the Third World Transition Program and for field hockey preseason, so I was in both at the same time. And I remember, first, being incredibly sore and exhausted from the intensive preseason training. But also with TWTP it was the first time, you know, growing up in Hawaii I didn't really think about my mixed race heritage at all. It was just kind of a normal thing, everybody was sort of mixed race. And then coming to do the TWTP program it was like first of all, getting woken up by pots being banged early in the morning [19:00] and then, you know, meeting all these people where there was more of a critical reflection on race and belonging and class and sexuality, it was, for a 17 year old – I got there when I was 17, turned 18 the November the first year – and it was like oh wow this is, you know something that I hadn't even thought about. It wasn't even in my consciousness. So that was like my first three days at Brown and already was, was kind of mind blowing.

DL: Yeah I mean, I guess, you know I actually, Kavita, I think I was in Andrews Hall as well. I don't, was I Kinger? Perhaps. It was in Pembroke, right, in that section?

KC: I think you were.

DL: So, now that you said that, thank you for reminding me. But yeah, I was the first of my family to go to a four-year college, so I had no idea what to expect. I, you know, I was only an hour away so that was, that wasn't too bad. [20:00] that was that was doable enough for to get laundry home and back and forth, and still get some cooked meals, so.

But just being, you know around people that I hadn't been around before and from all walks of life and even Canadians, right, like we were you know, they taught us a lot. But, it was yeah it was daunting at first and getting used to the workload and the curriculum and just how, you know, I think a lot of it, plus you know being athletes or being also just, figuring out how to like manage your workload right and, and how to, you know, how to come from a different, you know different state, nine hours away like, right so you're trying to figure out all that stuff. But Brown is great at like helping you integrate and helping you figure out. You know, and I felt like I think, even if you didn't know people going into it, like it was [21:00] you know quickly, quickly met up with, with people and they had different functions for different things that, that, you know, you kind of got acclimated to. So it was a good transition, you know, like, like, like Kinger and Becky said, we had you know, the hockey team to kind of help guide us and to, to show us the ins and outs. But it's, it's a great thing about Brown too, right, the location and just the, you know I go back and I'm like oh, it seems so big, but back then I didn't feel like it was that big. Everything is, you know you meet on Thayer Street and you go, you know, a building here and a building there that's you know no longer there. But, yeah I felt like it was the perfect size and definitely manageable.

AK: So I'm just sort of looking – Sorry, Stephanie. Do you have something to add?

SH: I was just going to say, kind of building on what Danielle said, didn't Pembroke seem so far from the main [22:00] campus?

KC: It definitely did, yeah.

SH: And when I went back a few years ago, like it took five minutes to walk but it felt like this, this huge slog in the winter when you would go from the Main Quad back to the dorm because I was in New Pembroke four or three, New Pembroke three, yeah. Anyway.

KC: Becky, weren't you in Keeney Quad? You were in Keeney Quad. We were both in Keeney Quad.

RKD: Yeah that's right, I was in Keeney Quad. Pembroke was far it felt like it was [overlapping]

KC: It was! It felt like forever. We had to wait for Darney to get there. We didn't, we didn't have cell phones right, so you couldn't call anyone.

RKD: I know.

KC: We were like, oh, she's supposed to get here soon.

DL: I was closets to the rink so that was okay.

KC: Yeah right, you were closer to the rink.

RKD: But that was the year at Brown they admitted more women than men, and so they had gone boys' room girls' room until they got Pembroke and that one floor was the Convent, right? They called it the Convent because it was all women.

SH: Yeah.

RKD: Funny.

DL: We made do.

KC: I'm just kidding. [23:00]

AK: So, tell me were there any of these vestiges of – so we're now over 20 years out in '93 from the Pembroke Brown merger. Is there anything left over, or anything lingering of like that Pembroke time? The Convent – I only ask this because the Convent definitely sounds like something that they would have, a term they would have used like in the '70s as this transition was happening. And so maybe if, if not, because I can see 20 years out that it, you know it could have been pretty well integrated. Like tell me a little bit more about like the coeducational aspects, particularly those of you who were in athletics or other extracurriculars, like the what were the sort of the gender dynamics going on at that time?

RKD: Well, I will start with just. On a side with it, Pembroke [24:00] being the women's, the women's college, that's where the hockey program started, and so we were still referred to as the the Pandas at times, sort of as an affectionate nickname. So if you read the BDH and there was articles about the women's hockey program, they quite often referred to us as the Pandas. So I feel like there was a bit of that history that we were all kind of aware of. At least you know, if you were on the hockey team, because we, you know we talked to some of the alumni would come in and, and that's where the program had started, because it was the oldest women's hockey program in the country, I believe. Correct girls? I believe that's correct.

AK: No? Not a topic you want to pick up? Okay that's fine, that's totally fine.

I was sort of looking over my notes. I will say what I found in the yearbook for those of you who are on the ice hockey team, [25:00] the quote that I pulled out was, "the class of '97 was simply the best to grace the ice in a Brown jersey." So, I just wanted to share that with you and just another reason why I'm so excited to have you all here. Tell me a little bit about these extracurriculars, like tell me about fitting them into your schedule, or what you were doing, or why you decided that you also wanted to be doing that while you were here at Brown.

KC: For me. I mean, obviously the camaraderie on the, on both teams that I was on was amazing. We actually had five, I think, at one point or six hockey-softball players so we were all so close and that really became my tight knit friend group. We're still friends, you know really pretty close to the to this day. And I thought that you know playing a winter sport and a spring sport, it

really helped me do better in school during those times because I had to be more [26:00] regimented with what I was doing because I had to work around practice time and figure out when we were on the road or whatnot and kind of make that work. And I think that really helped me academically being you know focused a little bit more. But overall, I mean like I said before, I knew I wanted to play sports in college. That was just really something that was important to me in my life and to be able to go to the rink every day with these two and, and the rest of our team was, I mean we had a blast. You know, there really weren't too many negatives to it. It was whether we were in trouble and skating on the ice we were still laughing about it. And we really, really, I feel really fortunate that I was able to meet these guys and, and our other teammates and, and you know I had a tremendous experience with it. I'm really glad that, that that I was able to play both sports and go to Brown and to just have that whole experience [27:00] was amazing.

DL: Yeah that's, that's a great quote in the yearbook. That's, that's pretty cool. I mean we, we did alright in our time there, I think, but yeah like we – I think like you said, the camaraderie right, and I mean even to this day, you know a lot of us are friends with the guys that are on the, you know the men's players. Like we, I live close to several of them. I just ran into a couple of them in the rank the other day. And you know, so it's, it's nice to you know, still have or thank God for Facebook right, too, and all the social media these days, where you can keep up with people and wish them happy birthdays and you know all that stuff which is, which is amazing. But, yeah we, we definitely had a really tight knit group I think and made some great, great memories that, you know again wouldn't have been able to do hadn't given the opportunity, so super grateful.

RKD: Yeah and same [28:00] for me. And, and Katie had mentioned, you know, I think it kept, kept her on track with school and I was the same. I feel like when I was in season, it was easier to focus on school because you knew you only had certain periods of the day, and so you had to do your work then and, and I've always found that I feel like I do better at whatever it is I'm doing when I'm busy, so I think that certainly helped. But, you know, having left Brown after I graduated and moved on and played on various other teams and coached my kids on teams, I've really come to appreciate what we had because not every team is like that and not every team is that close knit. And we did have it for, Kinger and I both, softball as well as as hockey, and so I

really appreciated that we just had this great group and great camaraderie for four years and, you know I really have left Brown with nothing ever bad to say about it, and now I'm coaching a, helping coach a junior girls team and you know I'm not, you know every one of them I'm like, "You should think about Brown. You should use think about Brown." So and there's a few that actually are, [29:00] and you know I'm like it's great, it's just a great place. So, I do feel happy about that because I'd often thought, well, I wonder if I'd have chose, you know if I'd chosen a different school if I'd had the same experience. And I'm not so sure now that it would have been. I don't know, I think we got pretty lucky.

KB: I think, for better or for worse, you know, sometimes my extracurricular activities took precedence over my work, schoolwork. Because I think there were just so many interesting clubs and activities that I never had access to before and I was also, as part of my financial aid package, I had a work study component, so I spent a lot of time either working or participating in clubs and, but I hadn really cool jobs, you know. I was determined to find like, the fun, the fun jobs. So my freshman year [30:00] I was lucky enough to land a job in the office of admissions in minority recruiting and I got to go out on the road, you know, sometimes with the admissions officers, and talk to prospective students about coming to Brown, which was really fun; and helped to organize some of these Third World Transition Programs and Third World weekends for, for students of color, for prospective students. And then, in my senior year I was a reader for the admissions office and actually got to read through applications and provide commentary. So that was kind of my paid gig. But then I really, one summer I took a an EMT course that was offered by Brown and I became an EMT and got to drive around in the ambulance. And didn't take very many calls, but I had Friday night shifts so I got a lot of drunk kids and I got to have a pager [31:00] which I thought was really cool. Who knew that cell phones were on the horizon?

But I also got to participate in some clubs so again, kind of reconnecting with my roots and maybe even connecting with my roots for the first time in many ways. I was active in the South Asian Students Association, where I routinely participated in the cultural talent show. Learned new dances from different regions of India and South Asia. And the Asian American Student Association. But I also loved going to just you know different events from other groups, there was just so much to do on campus.

SH: I would echo that, too, that often the extracurriculars might have taken a little bit of precedence over the, over the academics, especially Thursday night Funk Night [32:00] at the Underground that I seemed to go to almost religiously. But the extracurriculars for me, it was interesting. Being on the field hockey team was both great in that I met so many wonderful, strong women, but it was also difficult in the sense that we had a coach that was a bit difficult. And I would say one thing that I encountered for the first time on that team was something that's very specific to young women, which was, you know, food preoccupation and some you know some issues around eating. And that was really hard as an 18, 19, 20 year old, you know, trying to navigate that with people who are your friends and your colleagues and your teammates. And so that was, that was, that was hard and I think for me that was part of the reason why I didn't play my senior year, because I didn't want to, [33:00] you know, be around that and instead focused attention on my academics. Ended up writing an honors thesis and ended up running the, the Hiking Club which was known as the Brown Outing Club and, you know, doing things like running kayak role clinics in the pool or going hiking in New Hampshire. And that also helped me to go out, get out and see the Northeast where I had never really been before. So in that sense, the extracurriculars were both I would say 90% great, 10% you know, learning how to deal – it helped me learn how to deal with these interpersonal relationships which I think is a big part of the college experience.

AK: A lot of these sound like, you know, high points and low points, but are there any sort of like, we call them polaroid memories of your time at Brown. Like little snapshots of, of these high points or low points that have stuck [34:00] with you, or that are coming back to you right now, from your time as an undergraduate here.

DL: Well I'm sure we all have some that we probably can't get into on camera. No, I mean, gosh right, I'm sure there's so many I don't even know where to begin. I mean there really was, you know, again like obviously ours, mine revolve a lot around hockey. You know, you know, just like Stephanie and Kavita talking about just their extracurriculars. Like, that's one thing at Brown, like I didn't really get a chance to do, or time to do, or made time to do that, I wish, maybe I could have done more of to have like, get more involved or just open my eyes to maybe some of the other opportunities because there was so much offered, right. There was so many

different things you could do, and being, you know coming from the background I came from, I, I didn't know a lot of you know, maybe some of the activities or different culture [35:00] you know, things that they had going on. And we maybe stuck a little bit to what we knew, or I did at least. But gosh, polaroid moments I mean, yeah. I, just time at the rink, time, time with friends and on the field, and you know. Professor Hazeltine. He comes to mind, you know. He's, he's an, he's an icon and a legend as it is. And color coded notebooks and you know just try to like how to navigate, how to do all this stuff in a really you know, manageable way. But I'm sure you guys probably have something better than that. Probably polaroids, actually right, we probably had to have polaroids because there were no phones, cell phones right, we had the call boxes, we had – How did we get anywhere? Like how did you? [36:00]

I know! I have a good one, even though she got off, but we can talk about Kinger now that she's gone. Becky you might remember this. I was on the phone with her, a very long, you know swirly little cord that we had. Well, thank God, she needed it because she had a bat in her room. Literally a bat. And she was squealing to the high heavens. "How do I get this bat out? Oh my God!" She, and I think this was with the omni, it might have been freshman year. She ran out her door, closed the door, pretended to open it. I just was on the other side cracking up so hard. But it was, we'll have to relive that one again, but yeah just, just good times.

RKD: I think mine are a couple. One was freshman year trying to figure out the workload because it's not it wasn't quite like high school, certainly not the high school I came from, and I remember my freshman roommate was asleep and [37:00] I'm studying and studying and studying to a point where I couldn't figure out why the birds were outside my window chirping in the middle of the night until I opened my blind and realized, it was the next morning and that I had actually pulled my first ever all-nighter which is probably not overly recommended. But yeah, I'll never forget, like that I just lost track of time so badly because I just had so much material that I needed to, to figure out. So that that was one.

I mean a lot of mine are also around sports with the softball team. We had never beat Princeton and we finally beat them once my junior year, but they were just a powerhouse. And my senior year we went to Princeton and beat them twice in a doubleheader to win the Ivy league Championships. And I'll never forget the bus ride home because we just celebrated all the way home. And, and of course this is, this is a NCAA bus, like you're, there's, no, no alcohol, no

whatever, but we just I don't know we were just high on life and dancing and having fun and [38:00] just the girls, just the team and you know that's probably another one.

And then my third would be, I had a, I had a job as well, and I always worked for Food Services and I used to work at the bake shop and just the guys that I worked with there, you know. These were just guys that lived in Rhode Island and salt of the earth. Like, just the most awesome people and I got that job my freshman year and I held on to it because I just loved it so much. I loved being around those, those guys who were just kind of completely removed from my other university experience. Total compartmentalization, but to me that's something that will always be there as well, aside from you know the sports and the school and there was, was that side of it too.

KB: I would say, you know mine are probably a little more mundane. Getting, getting a checkbook and a bank account for the first time, you know, having to – Citizens Bank. Having to, [39:00] having a debit card and having to manage my own money. You know, going to Loui's at two in the morning and getting a greasy egg sandwich with my friends. And just having the freedom to you know manage my own schedule, I think that's probably a low as well for some other reasons. But being able to explore on my own.

And, you know, there were some times where I couldn't go home because it was too expensive and too far for thanksgiving and things like. And you know I had professors who invited me home and just getting to connect with people on a different, you know, level outside of the classroom I think was really nice sometimes. So I would say some of those are you know the most memorable.

And I mean who could forget Vartan Gregorian, you know? He was just present in our lives from the beginning and such a, such a, just embodied like [40:00] life, and you know living it to its fullest and I think led the university into a very interesting direction with subsequent presidents who I think really embody the spirit of Brown and the globalness of Brown, too.

SH: Yeah we are, we are the best class ever, right? We were the last best class ever. No, but you, Kavita, thanks for reminding me of the super fried egg special at 2, 2am and Loui's oh my gosh.

DL: Yes. The truck. The white truck.

SH: My polaroid moment is actually kind of a funny story. It was, it happened in the Ratty, of all places. And if you remember, the food at the Ratty was, was, was interesting and unique. And you know, every semester [41:00] one day, you would get a meat ticket. I remember they served like steak night. And then, but you know there were these huge like cereal dispensers that you could go and I think I lived off of you know, fruit loops for a while. And, and I remember sitting around there, there were this big square tables at the Ratty and I was there with you know some teammates from the field hockey team I think some guys from the soccer team and some people from the rowing, from crew, and, and I had offered, I was going to go make some cinnamon toast and I was like, "Oh does anybody want any cinnamon toast?" If you remember, there was this bank of toasters, and then it had, like all of the kind of these white plastic containers that had croutons and sesame seeds and, and cinnamon and, and some other things. They were just kind of white cylindrical tubes. And so what you had to do to make cinnamon toast was get the cinnamon and mix it with the sugar and then you know, [42:00] put butter on the toast and then you would get cinnamon toast. So I went over, I asked everyone at the table, "Does anybody want cinnamon toast?" And everybody kind of raised their hand and I went over, I put eight pieces of toast in the toaster, started making the cinnamon sugar, buttered them all up you know, put the cinnamon sugar on brought it back. And everybody took a bite into it at the same time, and everybody spit it out, because apparently I had mixed either beef or chicken bouillon with sugar and put it on the toast. And it was like this moment of a complete collective spit take in the Ratty in one year. Anyway that's a polaroid moment.

AK: That's fantastic. I regret that I wasn't there with you for all of this. So as we're sort of coming up on our time here, let's take ourselves to graduation day 1997. [43:00] Tell me about graduation day and where you kind of thought you were headed, where you were hoping to go after that day.

RKD: I'm going to start a little before graduation day to Kinger and I sitting in a big auditorium where they discussed what your loans were. And I don't know if anyone else had student loans and they told you, you know, "You'll be paying for the next 10 years." And I'll never forget Katie and I looked at each other and went, "Oh my God we'll be 32. We will be so old." And we've actually laughed about that since because we're like, oh 32. It would be so nice to be 32

again. But well, I'm going to say too, that you know, when we walked out the Van Winkle gates, I mean it's emotional because I don't think, you know, I don't know about the rest of you, but I didn't realize the significance really when I walked in them four years ago and I almost didn't go as a freshman and then I [44:00] was like eh, okay, right, and I, and I walked in. And so, when you walk out of them four years later, I was very happy that I had gone as a freshman to get sort of that significance, but and then you know when you go down the street and the alumni are clapping it, you know I would say the whole, the whole week was emotional. I know when we packed up our place and Kinger and Danielle and I we lived, we all lived together our senior year, and you know packing up and heading for home. That nine-hour drive for me, a few times I think I burst into tears because it was so special.

But I had gone home and I was going to become a teacher, that's, I had done the UTAP, the Undergrad Teaching Program at Brown and that's where I was headed. And then things kind of took a bit of a 180 and I wound up moving to Calgary for the Canadian, with the Canadian Olympic team, so things kind of things kind of changed for me. But you know, I do know that that that was pretty special week and you know all the all the activities. And, for me, as a Canadian there's not that much [45:00] I don't think there's that much put into the graduations from Canadian universities. Like I know my brother, his was just a you know, one hour walk across the stage, get your thing with the other 600 kids, and that was sort of it. So I didn't, I really appreciate how special it was and, and, yeah. I mean it's something I'll always remember and like I said the Van Winkle gates and just the, the goodbyes that were pretty emotional.

DL: Yeah I mean, I think Becky we probably, there's probably parts we don't quite remember from the nights before maybe. I know I had, I think Kinger and I had our greys on underneath maybe. But no, it was, yeah like she said, like super emotional like, right, everything comes to an end. And it's, it's the goodbyes very hard for sure, but I had my family in town and I majored in organizational behavior and management and in economics, so that was you know, [46:00] two, two degrees there, which was, which was great and able to do those both together. But, shortly thereafter, you know my ride was quicker than Becky's but yeah. It kind of sets in that okay real life is coming upon us very quickly, and you know the whole – I don't think I had a job lined up, but I know in my mind, I was like I'm getting a job. Like that's what you do. You go to school, you get a job, like quickly, right. So I was, I was in finance and ended up doing investments for

for a little bit and, and going the financial route. But let's not discredit Becky here, she went on to play in a few Olympics so she did all right for herself, even though she may not have, you know, gone into teaching quite right away. But yeah, so it's, it's but, but you mentioned the Van Winkle gates and, right, like the significance of that. You see the pictures, it's beautiful. It's the quintessential [47:00] like New England, Ivy League, you know visuals in college and stuff. So it's always great to go back you know every year, Campus Dance when we can, and this year again it'll be, it'll be great to, to kind of you know, really kind of relive it again in a little bit of different light. But yeah it's, it's, it's was, it was a great place. Still is a great place. Changed a lot. I don't think our senior housing establishment is there anymore. I think they did something better with the space than we probably could unpack in a day, but nonetheless.

RKD: And for the rest of you, we lived above Ruby's so you might have been some someone that was eating and keeping us up at 2am on the few nights we were trying to go to sleep those weekend nights.

DL: Yeah, right. [48:00]

KB: I just remember that my parents had flown in from California. It was the first time they had been on campus and I was supposed to move to Washington DC for a job that I maybe had helping with an immunization program in DC, but nothing was really set. And my deposit for my apartment was due there and I didn't have anyone to guarantee the apartment so my dad kept stepping out to try and make sure that I had a place to live and he missed half the ceremony and it was really chaotic and I felt terrible about it, but you know, at the end of the day he, again, just talked about our family history and how everything that they had sacrificed for me to be able to go there was in the name of having a better life for myself and my children when I would have a family of my own someday, and so it was very emotional. [49:00] I, and I agree, just you know the physical act of walking through those gates and having some finality to it was both exciting and, and daunting at the same time. And I think I was one of – many of my friends were going to Medical School or had these big consulting jobs, so I honestly felt a little bit lost, and maybe that I hadn't lived up to, to the hopes and dreams of my you know, my ancestors, my parents, so it was, it was bittersweet for me. But I'm I too am looking forward to going back.

SH: Yeah, just to echo what everybody else said that walking through those Van Winkle gates and being connected to all the alumni and you see the kind of generation after generation of these connections to, to Brown was really moving. I also remember that on baccalaureate, the day before, [50:00] two days before, I don't remember exactly, it had rained and everybody's tents had kind of drooped and so, by the time that the actual graduation ceremony came right everybody had these kind of, you know, hats that looks kind of funny.

But I think likewise just the Campus Dance, kind of the last hurrah seeing everybody before going out into the world was really, it was very emotional and I was going on to, I had a summer job as an outdoor guide, but I didn't know what I was going to do after that. I'd actually turned down a job in a law firm in Boston after going to visit on this beautiful spring day. It was on the 42nd floor of the Prudential Tower. And I just saw everybody in there in a little cubicle working away and I thought you know that really, that wasn't for me, that future. And I think Brown gave me the wherewithal and the kind of ability to think for myself, to think critically [51:00] and have that kind of self-knowledge after four years to you know, say no to that path and, and, and make my own, so. Yeah very, very emotional at graduation.

AK: Now, if we can just take these last few minutes to look ahead. What do you hope for Brown for the future, or maybe future Brown students, what do you see going forward?

DL: I mean, I think that you know it's, it's crazy to think 25 years, but the world has changed so much and I'm sure Brown has done an amazing job at keeping up with technology and keeping up with you know, all the, all the changing dynamics of everything that's going on in the world. And from a [52:00] you know, educational standpoint and class work and all that – the building, the buildings going up are, you know, amazing. And it's, it's, it's kind of funny my daughter's 17 now and she's, she's starting to look at at schools and Brown's on the list and it's like, I'm like oh I would love you to go there because it's great. Like I'd love to see like how things have changed and, and like I had such an amazing experience like it's 25 years better than when I was there right. So I mean again like, same with Becky, like there's a there's a lot of you know males and females, athletes and non-athletes, that I that I come in contact with and Brown is always you know at the top of my list and, and you know trying to express, you know how, like you said, you know, how you go about learning and it's what you learn as well, but how the

experiences you take away from it and, and how you immerse yourself in all the opportunities. So, it's been great to see Brown changing over the years and the city of Providence [53:00] changing over the years and, like I'm close enough that I've been back there several times to, to kind of see the progressions, you know, as they've, they've happened but. Yeah, no it's, it's, it'll be, it's very exciting. I hope everybody is going to be going back for the 25th and Becky we're going to get you down here. I don't care what you said, you're coming. But it'll be great to see you know old friends and new friends and, and people that you forgot about that you know, maybe you haven't, haven't seen, or buildings and just kind of go through nostalgia, so.

RKD: So I can't make it back for the Grad, however, I have booked, my youngest son is a baseball player so I booked him in the Brown baseball camp in August. I'm coming in August Darney. Be ready.

DL: Let's go.

RKD: It's been a while, since I've been down. And my older son and Danielle's daughter [54:00] are the same age. And our, our younger boys are the same age. And last time they got together they had a great conversation about baseball. They know more about baseball than – They can't ever convince me why they should never have good grades because it's not possible to know that much about baseball and –

DL: Right?

RKD: Yeah.

DL: The things they keep in their head. Useless knowledge I said, "You better do something with this when you get older."

RKD: Exactly. Exactly. So you know what, I love the school. I don't know what's going on in terms of academics with the school, but what I would love to see is some more Ivy League titles, for some of the sports. And I've heard there's been a big push put on because it kind of let some

of the athletic programs slide over the last little bit. And so I'd love to, it's such a source of pride I think right when your athletic programs do well. So I would love to see that. I've been in contact with the women's hockey coach a little bit and, you know, so I'd love to see them successful again because success breeds success, I think, and so you get some good athletic programs and it just continues. And obviously the, you know, the athletes and everyone that [55:00] comes in and brings that extra, like we've all said, the school is not just about the academics it's about all the other things that you do and bring to campus. The clubs, the sports the, you know all of it. And so I'd like to see the, I'd like to see that continue to thrive or to thrive again for some of the sports.

SH: I can go. I, I unfortunately will not be able to come back for the reunion because I'll still be teaching here at Santa Barbara. But I have had the occasion to go back to Brown a number of times in my capacity as a faculty member and as an academic and that's been really interesting. And you know I've been there, I've given a talk there, I've actually been involved with the Pembroke Center a little bit and also you know, been to conferences there. And the strength of Brown is really the, in my opinion, this freedom of thinking [56:00] and intellectual creativity and interdisciplinarity. I mean, I changed my concentration three times when I was at Brown from archaeology to art history to international relations, maybe history, you know. And having that freedom and trusting that, Brown students, the students who are attracted to Brown have that drive and have that kind of insatiable intellectual curiosity. At least that's my, what I've discovered. I also do alumni interviewing every year for, for applicants to Brown and you know, I think feeding that, fueling that continuing to, to, to advance that intellectual freedom and creativity, is what I would like to see for Brown in the future.

KB: Two words: pass fail. I think my, [57:00] you know my husband went to Hopkins and was miserable and you know he jokes that I spent \$30,000 to take West African Dance pass fail. But I think as Stephanie was saying, you know it's, it's what makes Brown so unique still. So I don't think it's, you know it's great that we have this wonderful new School of Public Health and that the Watson Center has been built out, and you know there's more sort of STEM opportunities now. But I think that things that are going to continue to inspire and engage future generations are the things that are what make Brown historically Brown. So it's you know, the open

curriculum, it's you know, I, I pay homage to my professors and, namely people like Ed Biser, and Meera Viswanathan, and Dean Marge Thompson, Ferdinand Jones [58:00] who taught, taught a course in the Psychology Department called Human Resilience. And you know, again it's, it's the people who make the place and I hope that Brown will continue to attract just wonderful human beings, you know who are professors and students from, from all walks of life because that's really what makes it a special place and will continue to make it a special place, I think. And I'm really excited for, for things like you know the, the initiative to make all admissions need-blind, including those for international students, because I think it'll just continue to add to the diversity of experience and thought that will pour into the university. So I find that very exciting as well.

AK: [inaudible] If anyone else really has a burning urge to throw anything into the historical record [59:00] before we close today. If not, I thank you all so much for your time and one more time for our listeners, this is the 2022 25th reunion class of 1997.

KB: I just wanted to say quickly, I have never had the pleasure of meeting any of these women, while, during my time on campus and I think it was so fun to be able to have the chance to do that, and maybe one day we'll actually get to meet in person.

DL: Yeah. Same. No. This is great. Thank you so much, Amanda for inviting us and, and putting this together and go Bruno.

RKD: Yes, thank you very much, it was a lot of fun. Nice to meet everyone.

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