

Transcript – Peggy McKearney '75

Narrator: Peggy (PJ) McKearney Hamel

Interviewer: Whitney Pape

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Track 1

WP: It is April 18, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. This is Whitney Pape, and I am in Alumnae Hall interviewing PJ Hamel, formerly Patricia McKearney...

PJH: Nope—Peggy McKearney.

WP: *Peggy McKearney*, excuse me. And you're a graduate of Brown in 1975, correct?

PJH: Right.

WP: Alright. Let's get started. How about, just as some background, talking about your family, childhood, the old, old history...

PJH: Sure! I was totally middle class: Dad was a school teacher, Mom was a stay-at-home mom back when there was no such thing as stay-at-home moms because all moms stayed at home, pretty much. And she then became a secretary as we got older, then went back and got a Master's and became a school librarian, so I was immersed in history and scholarship and learning. One brother, one sister, I was in the middle. And grew up in mostly Connecticut, and then Massachusetts, and, as I said, strictly middle class but never felt like we were missing anything. We wore hand-me-down clothes, had hand-me-down bicycles and played outside all day long in the dirt and barefoot, and it...back then, it wasn't what it is now. Now, you'd say, "Oh, that sounds kind of, you know, less than middle class," but back then, it was just the way everybody lived. And we were very happy.

And I went to high school in Massachusetts and fell in love with the Bruins, the Boston Bruins. I was a real athlete; I loved athletics. Played all kinds of sports, all the way through...just from field days as a little kid to middle school, which they called junior high back then, and into high school. I played every sport there was, and as I said, I loved the Bruins and then when it came time to decide about college, which was not the process it is now, it was more like, "Oh, I think...yeah, I'll go to college. Where should I go? Hmm...let me think." I loved the Bruins and I loved Eddie Johnston, who was their goalie, and I said, "Oh, I'd love to play ice hockey. I wonder if any colleges have women's ice hockey? Hmm." So I started scouting around and found out that, in fact, Pembroke did, and they were the first in the country to have it. And I

think they were maybe the only ones...Cornell did have a team, and I'm not sure when it started, but Pembroke had ice hockey. And I said, "Well, I'll apply there." And I applied early decision and back then, you got in early decision...September of my senior year. So I knew, you know, way ahead of time I was going to Pembroke, and so my senior year classes consist of gym, English, gym, gym, English, and I think I had to take something called "Civic." But...the senior year was just kind of a wash of fun. And I was, as I said, admitted into Pembroke, but when I got here in the fall of '71, it had become, magically, Brown. So we were the first class that was Brown. Brown women.

WP: How did you feel about that?

PJH: Oh...it kinda didn't make any difference in the big, you know, upheaval of everything that was going on...being a freshman in college and being away from home for the first time, and being at a very competitive academic atmosphere, where I had always, you know, shone as a student, now there was people just like me, and better, all over the place and trying to find your way in all that, it was like, "Pembroke? Okay, well there's still a Pembroke Campus and I live on it, so I guess it's still there, and now there's some technicality that we're going to be Brown, but..." You know, I was admitted, I think, to Pembroke because it was...I was just the student they wanted back then, I was middle class, I was high school, I was not prep school, I was not rich, and I had all of the qualifications, you know...grades, the National Merit, and the captain of three different sports teams that, you know, I had all of the qualifications...you didn't do community service back then. That wasn't part of your qualifications, but I think they were just looking for good, plain, average middle class students, and that's what I was, so, there I was.

And I got to Brown, and lived in Morriss-Champlin, and I just feel like it was a whole bunch of...we were a whole bunch of puppies set loose in a big, enclosed area, you know, all these, like, boys and girls—we weren't men and women back then, you were still boys and girls. You know, just kind of romping around and we lived in a co-ed dorm, you know, that was kind of a co-ed, but Morriss was women and Champlin was men, I guess, but they connected with each other. And you lived in these suites, and they were...everyone was back and forth all the time and it was really kind of risqué, you know, "Oh, it's almost a co-ed dorm!"

WP: For that time...

PJH: Yeah. Yeah. And so that's where it started.

WP: And do you...do you feel, you've touched on this a little but, do you feel like there was still some sort of Pembroke identity at that time?

PJH: Oh, there definitely was, because the older...women...I'll call them women...were...had been Pembroke, and we were the first Brown women, and so they were still very Pembroke. Some women still dressed up for dinner, you know, in sports skirts and stuff, but this was also just after the (inaudible) about the heart of the swingin' '60s, so it was the miniskirts and the long hair and the...not many were dressing...dressing up for dinner anymore. But the campus, I mean it was this beautiful campus which is still here, I see is...is pretty much unchanged looking...I didn't realize the Sayles Gym is the Sayles Gym—it's something else, but there is

some...there is a little snack bar...what was that called? Right...(sigh)...I can almost think of it...but we had our own little snack bar, and, you know, our own dining hall, and so we could just stay on Pembroke Campus for your living, if you wanted to, and I think some of the girls did. But most of us freshmen, having come out of, as I said, you know, this '67-'68-'69 and all that implies, we were ready to spread our wings.

WP: Was the Pembroke Library still in over in Pembroke?

PJH: Yes. Pembroke Library was open, and a lot of the women lived other places on campus. I just happened to be here, in Morriss-Champlin. But they were everywhere. We were everywhere.

WP: Did you have any expectations about what college was going to be like before you got here?

PJH: Not really, no. I...you know, I was...I think a lot of us were just innocent back then, you know, you go to high school, and as I said the college admission process was really not much. You wrote a paper application to where you wanted to go, and you'd pretty much get in, you know. But if...if you were pretty much qualified, there just wasn't the competition. And so my high school class, you know, scattered everywhere...here, there, and everywhere...and I don't think any of us were too surprised at college, it was...as I said, it was an open society back then, Brown, as I arrived at it, had basically had no grades...it was pass/fail or pass...Satisfactory or No Credit, S or NC, I guess it was. So you really didn't have to stress over your grades if you didn't want to. And you could pretty much make up your own major if you wanted to do that, too, so it was just a big...it could be a big romp, if you wanted it to be.

And for me, you know, it was a big, fun romp in athletics and photography and writing. And I ended up making my career in photography and writing and so it was, in fact, training for the future. I sometimes look at the Alumni Magazine now and see, you know, my classmates who are the cardiologist of this, and you know, head of the bank over here, and they've done all these amazing things and I've been a writer my whole life, carving out a living—which isn't always easy as a writer, but I've been lucky—and I think, "I wonder if I had gone in another direction...what if I had really take that Bio I, which was right down here in Alumnae Hall...if I had taken that seriously, what would I have been? Would I have been a doctor?" I know I wasn't interested in medicines, but, "Could I have been something else?" and I think, "I was a writer; I am a writer; that's what I am." You know, I've known that since I was five years old, and so, I just wrote at Brown, and I've continued writing ever since and I think that was my inevitable path.

WP: And do you particular...particularly striking memories from your college years? Any events or experiences?

PJH: Yeah. Yeah. We used to...Spring Weekend was always big; I don't know if it still is, but it was *huge*, and they used to have really good, I mean *really* name bands, for back then, I mean, Ike and Tina Turner and...I don't even know if the Grateful Dead might have been there, at some point, but it was a huge, huge thing where you'd just zone out for three days on the Green and

listen to music. And I do remember being shocked a little bit at the amount of alcohol and drugs on campus. This was, you know, the era of sex, drugs, rock and roll, you know, (inaudible) bought into that, but still, I remember coming out of my dorm room one day and the floor was actually awash in beer. It was about, probably, an inch deep outside my dorm and I thought, "Wow!" This was sophomore year and we lived, like, next to a suite of boys, so there was a suite of girls, then a suite of boys, and they had obviously had an enormous party and it was just beer everywhere and I thought, "Well, this is kind of...odd, you know, unusual..."

WP: "...if not gross."

PJH: Yeah. Yeah. So, that's one memory...is that I go from nothing in high school, not...no liquor, no drugs, no nothing, I just...I wasn't sheltered, but, you know, I just didn't go in that direction, I was an athlete...to having everything available all the time at Brown and yeah, that was surprising.

But mostly I remember playing sports, playing ice hockey, and the camaraderie with the...with the girls, the smell of the ice—I can still smell that smell when you walk into Meehan Auditorium for practice late at night, and you would just take a deep breath, cold air and the smell of the ice shavings and the...the...kind of the diesel fuels from the Zamboni, and you think, "Oh! This is the life! Playing ice hockey, you know, with these other girls and going on trips, although I've got to say, the long bus trip to Cornell—ugh! That's one of my worst memories, is that...it's like...eight-hour bus trip to Cornell. It was horrible! And we'd go up to Colby, up in Maine and you couldn't stay in a hotel or anything because we had no money. We weren't supported at all, I would say, by the University except to provide ice time and kind of a nominal coach. And we went up to Colby and we stayed in an unheated, empty classroom building, we had all brought sleeping bags and lay on the hard floor in our sleeping bags, freezing! I mean, freezing to death. It was the most uncomfortable night I had spent and...and I just thought, "Can't we do better than this?" I mean, "Do the boys, when they went on their hockey trips, did they lie in a non-heated classroom in sleeping bags on the floor, not even a pad underneath them? Come on!"

And that's when I started thinking, "Why...why...why is there this inequality between men's and women's sports at Brown? It doesn't make sense." And as a goalie on the hockey team, I'm very proud of the fact that—I think my memory's right—but I think I started every game for four years straight as the goalie. I used the JV men's equipment for practice, which meant I was putting on sweat-soaked equipment that was *disgusting*. It smelled. It was cold. It was wet. And these leg pads that would be just absolutely soaked from sweat on one side and ice on the other side and they were really heavy because they were so soaked with sweat and ice and water. And thinking, "Wow! What if I had my own gear! Wouldn't that be great? That would be so nice!" And I don't know if I ever did get my own gear in four years here because Title IX was enacted in '72, so that was after my freshman year, and it really didn't start to be taken seriously 'til about '75, so Brown was actually a little ahead of things by even providing women's sports at all, but they didn't support us very much. You know, I'm looking at my old yearbooks, and I see my freshman, sophomore year yearbooks...they didn't print any results. They had pages of the men's sports results for the whole year, you know, the men's varsity hockey and the men's JV hockey and the lacrosse and the...no mention of women. They had a few pictures. My junior

year, they...the yearbook...we started printing the women's results, and a few more pictures, so. It's a long process. Title IX kicked it off, but it was a long process and what we through back then is so different from what the women experience today, when they're fully supported, I believe, from what I can see. You know they, they have the same experience as the men and I remember we used to have little bake sales and we wore little...sold buttons that said "Panda Power" on them, in order to afford to go to Cornell. You know, this was a long ride, and you had to pay for all of your food and everything. No one was giving you anything, so...it was just very different.

WP: What other teams did you play against, since there were so few?

PJH: We played high school teams. We played...Cornell did have a team. We'd go up to Canada, in Montreal we'd play McGill, Queen's College...I forget who they were...yeah. And by the time I was a senior, then more of the Ivies were having...having teams. And there was...Colby did get a team fairly...fairly soon. But one memory I have as a freshman...I believe it was as a freshman, when we actually beat a Canadian team up in Canada, and that was huge! It was overtime; it was awesome. It was so exciting. But...and another memory I have, really unusual, is I was...we were playing down here and we were in between periods and I had terrible cramps, you know, that time of the month. Really bad cramps, and I was doubled over and kind of skated back out for the start of the next period, doubled over, and Susie Barnes was the team captain. She was a senior and everyone was kind of in awe of her, she was so amazing, and a good skater, and she was just kind of a woman about campus, you know. And she asked me what was wrong and I told her and she said, "Drop down on your knees!" and so I did, you know, I thought she was going to have me do some exercise. I'm a freshman, she's a senior, I do what she said. And she said, "Now, I want you to pray." She said, "Pray that you feel better for this period." I said...and she started praying, and I said, "Okay," and put my head down, and kind of prayed and she said, "Okay, get up!" and I got up, and I felt better, so. But that was a memorable moment, kind of praying in front of whatever fans were in the stands, which probably were only my dorm mates, but...you know...

WP: And you have to wonder what was going through their minds as they're witnessing this!

PJH: (overlapping) Yeah, "What is she doing?"

WP: What was the social life like on campus, in your experience?

PJH: It was...it was pretty lively, I would say. I remember certain times and certain crowds, you would start drinking at like 11:00 in the morning on a Wednesday, you know, to get ready for the weekend. But the frats were big...the frat parties on the weekend, you'd kind of make the rounds of frat parties and—talk about being awash in beer!—those frats were awash in kegs of beer. But other than that, it was, you know, you hung out in your dorm with your friends, and you sat around and you made popcorn and I found out pretty early that making brownies was a good way to kind of draw people in, and I lived in what was called the Sodaly (sp?) House, which is the corner of Hope and Benevolent. It's a big brick house, and we called it Sod House. We were the first ones to live in there. I lived there my sophomore-junior-senior years. And it was a big house that had pretty much been converted to communal living. And so, it had a nice

kitchen. So I'd go down to the grocery store, which is the CVS over here on the corner of Thayer Street was a grocery store back then. And get a box of brownie mix and make brownies, and everyone would smell the chocolate and come into the kitchen, and pretty soon you'd have, like 15 people sitting in the living room, you know, boys and girls—men and women—whatever, in a...tv, watching tv, talking late into the night, and it was just...a lot of fun. It was lot of fun.

WP: Was Sodaly (sp?) House co-ed?

PJH: Yes. Completely co-ed. Yeah.

WP: And...I don't know how to ask this question. How do you feel the relationships were between women and men, and that could be from any perspective...respect, academics, social life...?

PJH: I think some of the guys came...especially those coming from a...like a male prep school environment, were a little bit dismissive, but at the same time, here they were with all these girls! 'Cause they had been in the boys' prep school, and it was really exciting, so they didn't want to be too dismissive, but I could sense some superiority from the guys. But relationship-wise, it was pretty much like high school, who was going out with who, and who, you know, decided to drop who, and things...just silly things like that, and eventually, as you got a little bit older, and sophomores-junior-senior, you might form a long-term relationship with somebody, and some of 'em lasted, you know, well beyond college, and some...some we just ended. Yeah, it was pretty much like regular life.

WP: And did you feel that there was any difference in treatment of men and women by professors?

PJH: There was in one particular case, the only time I remember, is when I was in the...I think it was the concert band is what it was called...and there some women in it, not many...maybe it was an experiment. Maybe Pembroke women had not been in this Brown band before. And we lasted half a year and then after Christmas, the orchestra conductor just said, "Well, we've decided to drop you and you and you, and he dropped all of the women off the band. And I thought, "Hmm. Well that's not very nice." But did I complain? No. I was, "Okay, it's his call, he's the professor." You know, I had a lot of respect for authority back then and you know I just said, "Okay. I'm done playing an instrument, then. That's it."

Other than that though, no, I had wonderful teachers here, especially Jim Deetz, who was my advisor. He was in the Anthropology Department and he was...he was just a great guy. He showed...I mean, he had...never saw anything different from the men to the women.

WP: And how do you feel that your coursework at Brown helped you become a better writer, or did it?

PJH: It didn't. No. My coursework at Brown was...I would say...didn't end up using it at all. But I did use very much my writing and photography for the yearbook—I worked on the yearbook for three years, pretty heavily. I was the photography editor. And I wrote for the

*Brown Daily Herald*. And just the practice of writing term papers, of course, was good. But...but that writing, photography, kind of creative combination all kind of interwove through sports because the yearbooks...I took a lot of the sports pict...probably most of the sports pictures. And what I wrote for the *BDH*—I want to say *BDN*—*Brown Daily Herald* was sports, and took sports pictures. So that definitely helped me in my career because right out of college, I started as a newspaper reporter. And just went from there.

But I...it's funny, I look back and I think, "I could have gone anywhere and had that experience." And yet, just having that Brown degree has gained me entrance to a lot of things, like my...the second job—third job, really—I had that I started in 1990 and I'm still working there now, the owner was a Dartmouth grad and I think he looked at my resume and said, "Oh! Brown. Well, we have to interview her." And so...over I came, and I got the job and then 25 years later, I'm still there.

WP: And how did you meet your closest friends at Brown?

PJH: Through ice hockey and the dorm.

WP: And have those relationships continued?

PJH: No. No. I tend not to keep friendships once I leave someplace. So I didn't keep any high school friends and I didn't keep any...any college friends. One in particular, I've looked for, for years, just to see if I could find her name anywhere and I've never found it, so. She's kind of dropped off the face of the earth.

WP: And how diverse was the student body in the early '70s?

PJH: It was very diverse, from my point of view. I came from a white Boston suburb which did have what was called the METCO Program where they bussed kids from Boston, from the Roxbury, into our high school, so it's not as if I had never been with black people. But I think Morriss Hall, where I lived as a freshman, we had heard it was the only dorm on campus that was more than half black. So it was...it was really an experience to actually live with black girls. And, remember—we were like, what? Six? Seven years out of the Civil Rights Amendment, so it was still unusual to have blacks and whites be officially equal. It's like, I'd always felt, they're the same as us—blacks, whites, whatever—but to have that official stamp on it was still like older people were still trying to deal with that.

WP: Some still are.

PJH: Yeah. And I remember, we lived...I...my roommate and I freshman year lived here, and there was two black women that lived there and we got into this kind of pissing match about "white funk in the bathroom." And I didn't know what white funk was! I remember her saying, "You got that white funk in bathroom." I said, "What's white funk?" She said, "Come on..." I said, "No, I don't know what white funk is, I'm sorry." And we didn't hang out together, but we did get along, you know. Everyone...everyone...as I said, it was like a bunch of puppies all tumbled together, we all got along. There was no...no animosity...but the black women were

kind of feeling their oats at this time and, you know, "We're black. We're proud," and the same thing with the Feminist Movement. They kind of came together so that I think the black women at Brown in the early '70s were really...they were proud. Great! It was good. You know, it was all good. We needed to make progress and so I...I don't know how much we've really made, I mean, I wish we could make more and make it faster, but I think they were really starting it back then.

WP: And for the historical record, would you like to explain "white funk in the bathroom?"

PJH: I don't know! I think it had to do with not cleaning the bathtub after you took a bath, 'cause there wasn't a shower in there...I think it was just a bath. Yeah. If there was a shower, I don't...I can't remember. Maybe there was, but, anyway, yeah, there was stuff in the bathtub. [laughter] But you know it was...ultimately, it wasn't mean, it was like, we're trying to feel out each other's lifestyles, which could be very different, you know, coming from, maybe, the South. I remember there was one of my good friends, was here as a result of A Better Chance, the ABC program. And he was from Mississippi. What a different lifestyle he'd led! You know, and I became very good friends with him and it was very, very revelatory to me what he'd been through.

WP: Were there any Pembroke traditions that lived on during the...into the period that you were here? That you experienced?

PJH: I don't think so. No. No. If there was, I didn't notice. [laughter]

WP: And...hmm. What did your experience here at Brown teach you about women's role in society? Or gender in society?

PJH: Well certainly that...certainly that it was changing. I think right before we arrived, and even as we were arriving, the main thrust of college education for women was supposed to be, "Go meet your husband." You know, that was, you know, spend four years kind of dabbling around and end up getting married at the end of it. Yet here we were at Brown, an Ivy League university with this great faculty and this great degree at the end of it. Maybe you should do something more than just hang and wait to meet a husband, you know? So...especially as time went on, we did feel more and more like, "You don't have to get out of school and just get married and be a housewife and a mother, you can have a career. You can do what you want. Maybe you can do all those things, and have a career, too. You know, that was really not an option back then, or it wasn't something you would strive for. I think people that worked and had a family for a lot of the part were poor, they had to work. And they had a family, and they had to work to support them, but most women—middle-class, at least—didn't choose to work and have a family; they stayed home. And so there were, on the edge of the cusp, again, of change. And a lot of my classmates have gone on to...on to...pro...I'd say, probably most of them have gone on to have great careers.

WP: Hmm. If you could, if you could relive those years again, would you change anything about what you experienced here?



PJH: I think I would at least ask the question why women's sports weren't supported. At least get the conversation going. I'm not even sure who I would ask...we had Miss Lutz and Miss Gorton for the two phys. ed. teachers and they were kind of the coaches of all the teams. And what that meant was...I don't...I'm not sure if they actually coached, or if they just oversaw a student...like, our hockey coach was one of the...was a boy who had played hockey in high school, I guess, and now was a student at Brown, so he coached us. And then eventually we had a...someone that had been on the Brown varsity hockey, Stevie Shea, was our coach, and Bobby Larry was our coach. They had both played varsity hockey. But why...why did I just assume it was okay to be treated like that? I don't know. It, maybe, just 'cause that's the way it had always been. I remember...well, that's not true, 'cause in high school, the girls' sports and boys' sports were completely equal, but I got here and I took a step down, athletic-wise. I played field hockey my freshman year, and...and didn't come back because the level of play was so much lower than what I had experienced in high school, and I didn't enjoy it. I didn't want to play a poor game; I wanted to play a good game. And so I didn't do that anymore and so...come to think of it, yeah, Brown athletics for women were below high school quality...

WP: Wow.

PJH: ...as far as support, and at least in the case of field hockey, as far as ability of the players.

WP: Wow. It's interesting to think that you were working at the *Brown Daily Herald*, covering sports, sort of at...a good writer...

PJH: Yeah.

WP: It's interesting that it wouldn't even occur to you to even put something in the...an editorial in the paper to say, "What is up with this?"

PJH: Well, that was run by the men, too. The *Brown Daily Herald* was all men, and so I was just a little flunky writing my sports articles. I didn't...I never went up the chain of command at the BDH like I did at the yearbook. No, I just wrote my article and that was it. I don't remember if we got paid something, but I...I had to cobble together a bunch of different jobs on campus because my parents weren't paying for me, so that might have been one of 'em...

And I just want to say, for the record, when I started here, tuition was \$1800 a year and it went up \$200, as I recall, every year, so it was \$2000, then \$2200, \$2400 when I graduated. And you could actually...I had a scholarship, and so you could actually work your way through college, even an Ivy League college back then. I worked at the snack bar over there, off Hope Street, and...yeah, it was good.

WP: Those days are long gone, unfortunately.

PJH: Yeah. Oh, I know it.

WP: So, life after college. Did you have a particular vision, or expectations about what that would be for you?

PJH: I probably saw myself as my mom, which is, you know, that...that's the role model I had, that...you...but with the addition that I fully intended to work, because I loved working, I loved writing, and I had no intention of giving that up. How that writing would make money, I wasn't sure, but started out in newspaper work and continued that for fifteen years and then went into business world, business writing, and where I still am at King Arthur flour. And these days, I'm all digital, you know? So, started out with a manual type writer...I remember getting a typewriter to come to Brown: "Ooh! My own typewriter!" And now it's just totally, totally digital. I don't even hand write anymore; my handwriting's so bad, it's all computer keyboarding and iPhone and things like that...social media.

WP: Yeah. It's been a big shift in the course of your career.

PJH: Yeah, but as a writer, you know what? If you evolve with the times, if you change with the times, you can keep being a writer. There's always...there's always room for writers. Especially if you're not set on writing the next Great American Novel, but are willing to just use your craft for whatever you need to do to make the living. And I've enjoyed it a lot. I'm very lucky that I love getting up and going to work every day. Still.

WP: That's a blessing. You mentioned that perhaps your coursework hadn't done much to hone your craft, were there any mentors or professors that were particularly encouraging, or...?

PJH: No. No. No.

WP: It's a good thing that you knew what you wanted to do.

PJH: Yeah. And I got more from my fellow students, I think, than from professors, like, there were people that I took photographs with, and we'd compare photos, and say, "Why didn't you do this? And why don't you do..." There was a dark room under Faunce Hall, in the basement. And we'd be down in the dark room, showing each other how to do things in the dark room. And, so, yeah, that was...I got more from them and...nothing against the faculty or anything, I chose not to take advantage of anything. I chose my path. But it worked out well.

Well, one more thing about the social life, it was interesting...I was not a...someone that stayed up late, you know, I never had. But I always got up early, went to bed early, but that...you wouldn't have any social life if you did that. So I found on Saturday night, there was Midnight Mass, so a bunch of us would go to Midnight Mass, and then the party would start after that. So I knew I had to stay up to (inaudible) to go to Midnight Mass, I'd stay up 'til then and then go to mass, and then you feel good about yourself, and then you go and, you know, start drinking or whatever you're doing.

WP: Where did you attend mass?

PJH: At the...it's still there. Isn't it right...right...right on, you know, on the Green?

WP: Oh!

PJH: The one...that building that if you're standing in front of Faunce House, and you're looking down, and the Van Wickle Gates are on your right, the building kind of down and in the right hand corner. On the top floor of that had mass.

WP: Oh! It's now where Anthropology and Archaeology...

PJH: No. That's not where Anthropology was.

WP: It's a beautiful, beautiful renovation. Worth looking at. [note: WP misunderstood which building on the Main Green PJH was describing. Clearly, PJH meant Manning Chapel, just north of University Hall, not Rhode Island Hall, in the southwest corner of the quadrangle.]

So, if you weren't mentored professionally at Brown, except by other students, what about in your professional life? Were...were there any people that took an interest in your career?

PJH: Ah, yes. The place that I'm working at now, King Arthur Flour, was owned by this fellow that graduated from Dartmouth, and his wife, whom I worked with for...for...oh, maybe...let's see...six, seven years before they kind of slid into retirement. And they were wonderfully supportive. Wonderfully supportive of my writing, what I was doing there, you know, it was...it was...I...I still call them probably some of my fondest friends, Frank and Brinna Sands. They're wonderful people. And I...I set a goal, a long time ago, that I wanted to really be the best. I was very competitive as an athlete; I was a competitor. I wanted to be the best writer, somehow, at something. So when I was working in a newspaper in Maine, I won a bunch of Maine Press Association awards. I thought, "Okay, that's step one." I moved over to King Arthur Flour and I've won Catalog Copywriter of the Year nationally. I said, "Okay, so, I won an award for, you know, marketing copy." And I wanted to win a book award, so I wrote much of a book called *The Baker's Companion* [*The King Arthur Flour Baker's Companion: the All-Purpose Baking Cookbook*. Woodstock, VT: The Countryman Press, 2003], that won a James Beard Award in 2004, which is like the Academy Awards, Best Actor of the book world...food book world. I did that, and I thought, "Hmm. All that's left is digital writing, so just two weeks ago? The King Arthur website, which I had entered into this competition, International Association of Culinary Professionals, it's a big, international organization of foodies. Our website won first prize in that.

WP: Congratulations!

PJH: I said, "Okay, now I...I...my bucket list is done, I'm a competitor, I'm a writer, and I won what I wanted to win for writing, over the course of my career.

WP: That's wonderful!

PJH: Yeah! And I hope that doesn't sound like bragging, but it just...it just...it was my bucket list and I'm...I'm proud that I've accomplished it.

WP: So what does that mean for you, as far as the next goal?

PJH: The next goal, I...I just want to, you know, I'm going to retire at some point. I'm 62; I'll retire within eight years, probably by the time I'm 70, and I...I just want to make the people I work with better people. To help them see a path for their career, where they can have families and they can still have a career and they...they won't get downsized for choosing to, you know, spend some time with their families. I work with a lot of women and every...every person I work with, practically, is under thirty years old, including my supervisor, so. It's interesting. And I love them, they're great. I love the energy; just the...the...view they have...they're more like us than they know. You know, they think they're going to save the world, and we thought that, too. And we tried. You know, we all try. But...I just...I want to mentor them, maybe like I wasn't mentored for much of my career. But I would like to help people see that you can be a good person and succeed. You don't have to be a jerk to be successful.

WP: That's a wonderful lesson to pass along.

Would you like to talk about your volunteer work?

PJH: Sure. I'm volunteering two places right now...I've volunteered for a long time at Norris Cotton Cancer Center up in Lebanon, New Hampshire, where I was treated for cancer fifteen years ago, which is quite an experience. It changed me physically, a lot: I developed "chemo brain," I couldn't think of words, which for a writer is very difficult, and even now, my mind is sometimes like a blackboard that's been wiped clean. I have to rebuild vocabulary. But anyway, out of that difficult experience came a desire to give back to this place that had saved my life. And so I've been volunteering there with other breast cancer survivors, and have a big online group, about 70-something women that have all been through treatment there and we communicate with each other via email and meet once a month to just...you know...as one of the women said, talk and laugh and talk about our jobs and shoes and kids, and sometimes cancer, and we have just a bunch of women with a shared experience. So, I volunteer for them a lot, quite heavily. And luckily, King Arthur Flour gives us 40 hours a year to volunteer, as part of our...our perks, so. I spend a lot of it on that, but now I'm also working at Plimouth Plantation as a baker, which is great! I work in their craft center and talk to people about how the Pilgrims baked bread, and what they used, and show them their oven that we have, a brick oven, and I just started that, but it's...it's...it's wonderful. Just...I love teaching people about baking. I really do. We call it "sharing the joy of baking" at King Arthur, and that's what I want to do. I love it.

WP: Well, you obviously have a history, back to your brownie mixes.

PJH: Mm-hmm. That's right! And I have a King Arthur Flour history, because I remember, that old market on Thayer Street. I decided I'd go away from the mixes and try baking from scratch brownies, oh my goodness. So, I had to go to the flour part, and looked at all of these flours, and what did I know? But here was this flour, it had a picture of a horse on it, on the bag, and I thought, "Well, that's pretty." And it said, "Never bleached." And I thought, "Well, I guess that's good. I don't know! Whatever." And so I bought it, and that's...since that was the first flour I used, that was the only flour I used my whole life, and ended up working for 'em.

WP: And...have you been pursuing baking as its own hobby, or...?

PJH: Not...not as a hobby, because I work at...but I do...I do donate a lot of baked goods to a lot of different places. Part of my job, I bake a lot. I test recipes. And so the volunteer programs, couple of places on the Cape [Cod] get a lot of my baked goods; the church gets a lot of my baked goods. I keep people well supplied with yummy things to eat.

WP: And are there any other social, political, religious organizations that have been important in your life? That you'd like to talk about?

PJH: I think...they...I became a Reiki practitioner, which sounds very, very, "Woo! Is that off the wall!" You know, I...yeah, I'm not someone that would generally believe in...in...you know, I'm pretty fact-driven. But I had it done to me after I'd had cancer and it just really took. I could really feel this, this mind-body connection, and that got me very interested in the mind-body connection. Since then, I've become a dedicated meditation person, and, you know, I'm so glad to see this mindfulness coming to the front now with people and they're teaching it in schools, even, high schools, elementary schools. I think it's very important that we understand how much influence your mind has on your physical body. And so I made that kind of a cause with people, and telling them it...it's not wacky, you know. Meditation's not wacky; it's good. And Reiki or whatever therapy you choose...acupuncture, you know, it's...there's something to all of this. So you should listen to it.

WP: Well, obviously, your physical body has been important for a long time, too, so it doesn't seem that bizarre to me, actually.

PJH: Yeah.

WP: Yeah, it's very interesting. So, how...how have you learned about that? How did you pursue...?

PJH: As part of the breast cancer experience, I got hooked up into a writing group that was run by a woman named Leah Carrie and Jodi Picoult, who's an author...I don't know if you know her. She...she lives up in Hanover, New Hampshire, where I lived and she and Leah ran this writing group and we ended up traveling around the state, putting on readings, kind of performance readings of...of...what we'd written about breast cancer, and...now I forgot your question, see?

WP: Oh! How you pursued your knowledge of Reiki, and...

PJH: Oh! Leah's mother was a Reiki Master. And she volunteered to do Reiki for anyone that was interested, anyone in the group. And I said, "Well, sure, I'll try anything." I was always adventurous. And Sybil did Reiki with me and I liked it so much, I asked her how I could continue and she said, "Well, I can teach you it." As a Master, she could make me her student. I became her student and went two levels of it, so I'm not a Master, but I've been through the first two levels where I can give it to other people.

WP: And would you...can you describe what the process or treatment or whatever is like?

PJH: It's...it's...it's...you lie down, and the Reiki person will either touch you or not even touch you, but just put their hands maybe a couple of inches above your body, different places on your body, and just hold them there. And what it's doing is...is kind of straightening out the...the energy fields that flow around your body. And the point of it is to get your body where it can heal itself. It's not...Reiki isn't healing; it's getting your body kind of untangled, getting its energy untangled so that you can...you can...your body can do its job and heal itself.

WP: Very cool.

PJH: And, you know, that tends to sound really wacky. I keep coming to this, like, 20 years ago, I would have said, "Oh. What are you, kidding? Come on!" But I had it done to me and I said, "Whoa!" I felt great. You know, I could feel this energy, I remember, still remember, I felt it from my head to my toe that this like electric charge of energy, and I thought, "Wow! That...that's physical. That's real. I *felt* that." You know, from whatever cause, but there...there's something to this. For *me*, at least, there's something to this, so I wanted to pursue it.

WP: Okay. Do you have any thoughts—I'm totally changing gears, here—back to Brown. And just coming back to the area, the few times you've visited, do you have any reflections on how campus life has changed or...?

PJH: I haven't seen enough of it today to see how it's changed, I...I...I think that probably human nature being what it is, and we humans being what we are, it's still probably a bunch of puppies in a big pen when you're a freshman, you know, you've got the people looking over you. I think the students, from what I can see, are so accomplished now, they're so high quality, you know, just the admission rate is so low that you get so many good students, that I imagine the classes are very competitive and there's grades, now, I assume, which we didn't have grades, you know, it was kind of free for all, academically. If you wanted it to be that. You could have grades, if you wanted to, back then, but I think it's...it's probably more straightforward now, the academic part. I imagine the social part is still boy meets girl, girl meets boy, and, you know, and everyone—sometimes—lives happily ever after. I'm sure the athletic part is very different. I think probably they don't take an eight-hour bus ride to Cornell, I would assume.

WP: I don't know.

PJH: I don't know. Hopefully not, it was a miserable ride. And I know the women's sports are really, really supported now. And the whole athletic complex looks very different. You know, we had Meehan Auditorium and then at some point, they built the swimming pool, 'cause the original swimming pool—I don't know if you know—was over...was it in Wriston Quad? It was...it was underneath under one of the dorms and it was, I think, a two-lane pool. Yeah, it was...it was...it was still there, and they were still using it, but they weren't, I think, maybe when I was a junior they built the...the original swimming pool that's since been torn down, I believe.

WP: Yeah. Yeah.

PJH: Yeah.

WP: Did they have swim meets in that two-lane pool?

PJH: I think they did.

WP: Wow.

PJH: Yeah. Maybe by that time it had been relegated to practice, but it was still down there.

WP: Wow.

PJH: Yeah.

WP: So I was surprised when I saw the name "Pandas." I think you were the first person that mentioned the Pandas and I thought, I thought it was...

PJH: The Pembroke Pandas.

WP: Yeah. So...

PJH: 'Cause we were...couldn't be the Bears, because, you know, we weren't Brown, we were Pembroke. So we had to be the Pembroke Pandas. And as I said, the uniform was blue jeans and these kind of panda sweaters, that you put a t-shirt on underneath. And I made my own, out of an extra-large, double-sided t-shirt that was...I remember...gold on one side and blue on the other, and sometimes I wore the gold and sometimes I wore the blue. And I took...took electrical tape and wrote "Pandas" on it with electrical tape. And I think I put my number on the back, too. I don't remember if I wanted to be Eddie Johnston's number or not, but I did put my number. And, but, eventually, I forget whether I was sophomore or a junior, but we did get nice uniforms, except it still said "Pandas" on 'em, but they were, you know, we actually had socks and shin guards underneath the socks and they would take us over some place, one of the boys' hockey team's father...boy's hockey team member's father had a sports store. And they would drive us over to the sports store where we could buy our shin guards, and our skates, and whatever we needed to buy at the beginning of the season. And that was a nice excursion, so.

WP: Some support.

PJH: Yeah. There was...I don't want to put 'em down, I mean that's just the way it was. You didn't think any differently. It wasn't...Brown wasn't saying, "Oh, we're going to denigrate women's sports!" That's just the way it was. You know, and it took time to change. So. And as I said, we had a heck of a lot of fun. We really did.

WP: Any...any other topics you want to talk about?

PJH: Uh, no.

WP: Reflections, or...?

PJH: Reflections? I'm...I'm very proud to have gone here. I think it's a great institution. I...I'm not sorry that I didn't take advantage academically, because that's not where I was headed. I was headed to a creative life, with photography and writing and I got all the education I needed in that from working on the yearbooks and working for the newspaper and writing term papers. And it just worked out very well.

WP: Wonderful.

PJH: Well, thank you, Brown! And Pembroke.

WP: Thank you.

## Bonus Track 2

WP: So we're now looking at some old yearbooks and the changes that happened over the course of the four years that (inaudible).

PJH: (inaudible) my sophomore year yearbook, I started working for the yearbook, so I...I know I had, because I recognize some of my pictures. But, see, there's a lot of men's, men's, men's, men's, men's, men's...lots of men's sports...and then we get to a page of the Pandas! And I remember this is Polly, and that's me. That was up in Canada...men's, men's, men's, men's, men's... Because really there weren't any other women's sports here. We have a page of the Pandas, and...that's...it.

WP: Wow.

PJH: Were there other women's sports? I know there were, I really (inaudible) but...no, and you get to the summary page here, and there's no women's sports here. It's all, you know, soccer, tennis, but it doesn't say women's/men's, so you know that women's sports weren't really on the radar yet. So...

WP: That's the 1973 yearbook.

PJH: That's 1973. We'll skip ahead to 1975, when I was a senior. And that was the band director that didn't want us to play in the band. Let's see the sports...

WP: He doesn't look like a misogynist. [laughter]

PJH: And no one will know he is, because we can't see pictures here on the radio, but...on the recording. We're doing better, see? Now we've got lacrosse...



WP: I see a skirt!

PJH: We've got women's lacrosse and there are skirts, yup. I did play lacrosse for one season. I was drafted, because they needed a goalie and I was absolutely horrible. I had never played lacrosse before. Imagine that, now, these days, in an Ivy League school you play lacrosse when you've never played it in your life, you play it in an Ivy League school.

WP: Women's crew...

PJH: Crew. Tennis. There's a tennis picture. And football was still a big deal, soccer wasn't really a big sport, though. See all these soccer pictures. Field hockey. A whole page of field hockey! And basketball. And hockey. Here we are, hockey, we have...hockey and basketball shared a spread. And we look to here, and we've got women's swimming, women's gymnastics, women's basketball, women's varsity hockey, women's varsity tennis, varsity field hockey—they didn't even say "women's," because it was assumed they were women. So, look, we had a full schedule by the time I was a senior, things had really, really changed, which is nice, because '75 was when Title IX really started to kick in and it's evident here, so. There you have it, a little history from the pages of the yearbook.

WP: Evidence. Hard evidence!

PJH: Yeah.

WP: Of progress.

PJH: Yup.

WP: You attribute it to Title IX, as opposed to any sort of...

PJH: Well, the Title IX was pushing, you had to...it was the law...you had to do it. And so, if the school got any federal funding at all, and you know most schools do. I assume Brown had some kind of federal funding. They had to have equal opportunity for all in all areas, and that included athletics, so.

WP: Certainly, participating in NCAA, I would assume also requires compliance with Title IX.

PJH: Yeah. Yeah. Although I'm not sure that...that dragged on for quite a while, because the NCAA put up a big stink about women back in that era. They didn't...no, they didn't want women being official. Because it was the AAIW, I think, the American Association of...something...Intercollegiate something or other, but it was women. [AIAW, Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women] The women's NCAA. And they finally...the NCAA finally absorbed that at some point, but it took a while.

WP: Well, thank you. Yeah, it's interesting to see how Title IX plays out now. My nephew is a...rowed crew in college, and has gone on to coach, and he's at Michigan State, where the men's crew is a club to keep the balance...

PJH: Oh, yeah!

WP: ...for Title IX, so... [laughter]

PJH: I know, it's hard. My husband was a college wrestler, and men's wrestling took the huge hit...

WP: I'm sure.

PJH: ...from all the women, and he...he's very...he was very sad about that.

WP: Right.

PJH: Because he was...he was a wrestling...wrestler, and a wrestling coach for years and years and years and years.

WP: Yeah.

PJH: And for some reason, wrestling, which isn't an expensive sport, they decided they could afford to cut that, so.

WP: Hmm. Well, it probably didn't produce any revenue. [laughter]

PJH: Yeah. Well that's true. But Brown still has wrestling.