

Transcript – Virginia MacMillan Trescott '38

Narrator: Virginia Macmillan Trescott

Interviewer: Elizabeth Conover

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Length: 2 audio tracks; 39:37

- Track 1-

Elizabeth Conover: [00:00] I guess we can start with were you born in Providence, or...?

Virginia Macmillan Trescott: Yes, I was born in Pawtucket, which is just outside of Providence.

EC: And did you live there with your family?

VMT: Yes, I lived with my family. We went to college from Pawtucket.

EC: And where'd you go to high school?

VMT: I went to Pawtucket High School.

EC: That's a good high school. [laughter] Do you have any sisters or brothers?

VMT: No, I'm an only child.

EC: Oh, I see. And what did your parents do?

VMT: Well, my father was an automobile salesman, and my mother was a bookkeeper.

EC: I see. And did they go to college?

VMT: My father went to University of Rhode Island, but my mother didn't. She went to a bookkeeping school, commercial.

EC: Was your mother from Rhode Island also?

VMT: No, my mother was from Maine, but my father is from Rhode Island.

EC: I see. And did you – why did you decide to go to school? Was it taken for granted that you would go, or did you have [01:00] your...?

VMT: Yes, I always wanted to go to college. And, of course, the college in this area was Brown.

EC: And what did it take to get into Brown?

VMT: Well, we could come in on our high-school record at that time. There was no special examination. You were certified, and you came in.

EC: And what kind of expectations do you remember having coming into Brown? How do you remember it?

VMT: Well a group of us came together from our high school, and we really, you know, had an enjoyable time just coming to the college. And it was very – something quite exciting to come, and not have to come alone, but to come with friends.

EC: Yeah. And you lived off campus for a year?

VMT: Yes, we lived at home and commuted by bus and trolley car.

EC: I see. OK. There were dorm girls who lived on campus?

VMT: Yes, there were.

EC: Were they generally from out of state?

VMT: Yes, there were [02:00] a few from New York and other places in this area. I mean, not too widely. There were some from distant parts, but mostly the East Coast.

EC: Was there a marked difference, did you feel, between the city –

VMT: There was a rivalry, but individually we were friends. But in an election or something of that stock, there might be the dorm candidate and the city-girl candidate.

EC: I noticed that you were active in lots of organizations.

VMT: Well, I enjoyed being in everything I could have the time for. I loved to work with student government, and worked on the newspaper.

EC: And was that differentiated between dorm and city girls? Was it harder for some to get involved than others, do you think?

VMT: Well I think that – no, they – everyone participated. I think that you did find that the dorm people stayed away from [03:00] certain organizations. It was a mix of dorm girls and city girls in the organizations, working together.

EC: I see. What was your major?

VMT: Latin.

EC: And why did you decide on that?

VMT: Well, I was very interested in it, and then I had a professor who was very interested, and more or less talked me into doing that as a major. And I continued with that.

EC: How was it to come from off campus? Did you follow the same rules?

VMT: Yes.

EC: The city girls on campus, you did –

VMT: Yeah, we all had the same rules. Of course, dormitory people had rules about the dormitory – late nights and that type of thing, permission to go... We were free on that part of it. But on the campus itself, we would follow any of the rules for the college.

EC: And what were those rules?

VMT: There weren't too many. We were very big on not having smoking in certain areas. That was part of the student government [04:00] to take on. But the rules were fairly simple.

EC: So smoking was a –

VMT: That was the issue, more or less, during college.

EC: What were other issues?

VMT: Well, it was a very proper time. We had teas. Almost every organization, when you were joining an organization, you went to a tea for that organization. And when you went to teas, you went very properly dressed, with a hat and gloves.

EC: [laughter] What about regarding the Brown campus? What were the rules?

VMT: Well, there weren't any specific rules that I remember. It's just that you didn't usually go over for classes until the last two years of your college term.

EC: The first two years were at Pembroke?

VMT: The first two years were intended to be more on the Pembroke campus. The classes were given here, mostly in Pembroke Hall. And then as you got into a major, you were going over the hill, as they called it, more often. [05:00]

EC: I had just read that you were required to wear hats and gloves, or was that...?

VMT: Oh, that was only when you went Downtown Providence.

EC: Oh, I see.

VMT: No, we didn't have to do that on the Brown campus. It wasn't quite that formal.

EC: Oh. What about chapel and meals, and things like that? How does that work?

VMT: Well, we did have chapel twice a week. One was Dean's Chapel, and the other was the student government chapel. And that was required. You would have so many cuts, and after you had taken that number of cuts, then you were required to be at services.

EC: And what if you went beyond your ...?

VMT: Oh, there were punishments for certain things, you know? I mean we had rules and regulations, and draw certain fines for things.

EC: Money fines?

VMT: I don't recall any money fines. You could do some punishment of some sort, and I don't really recall what they were now. [laughter]

EC: Yeah, OK. Do you recall anything about, let's say, the 1920s? [06:00] Growing up in the 1920s, as far as...? [inaudible]

VMT: That would be our junior high school years probably. Not too much about that, except that you were, you know, going to school and doing the regular things that a child would do at that time. You weren't as much aware, I don't think, of what was going on outside your own school world as the people are today.

EC: And what about when the Depression came? How did that affect you?

VMT: Well, that affected all families, you know? Really, you had to cut back in every possible way. I mean, you were aware of people on the street selling apples, and the whole feeling was a very low, depressed feeling [inaudible].

EC: Yeah. Did that carry over to your academics?

VMT: It did, because you felt that you were very privileged to be able to be going to college at that point, and it [07:00] made you more appreciative of the fact that you could make it, and have a chance to study.

EC: Yeah, I'm sure. Did you know people who wanted to go to college but couldn't, for financial reasons and what have you?

VMT: Yes, mm-hmm, yes, mm-hmm.

EC: Were there other women's schools in Providence at that point?

VMT: Not – well, there were – the Rhode Island Normal School, or the teachers' training school that people went to also. And I don't recall anybody else.

EC: What was the main ambition, do you think, of girls your age going to college at that time? What did they eventually want to do?

VMT: I think teaching was quite important. And I loved library work, which was important to me, but I think teaching was – you had some girls who went into other professions, but for many probably it was teaching [inaudible].

EC: So you knew that before you attended school, you wanted to work in a library? [08:00]

VMT: I knew, I had tried several things, I thought about archaeology, and took courses in that, realized that would take a long time and a lot of money. So I gave that up, and I thought journalism would be fine, and I worked on the paper. And as I worked on it, I realized that really wasn't what I wanted to do. So then I tried the library and found that's what I did want to do. So I did that.

EC: How easy do you think it would have been to break into those other fields, being a woman? Do you think that would have been harder?

VMT: I think it would have been harder.

EC: Yeah, yeah.

VMT: In those days, I do.

EC: So after college, what did you do after you got out of college?

VMT: After college, I did go in – I worked in the John Hay Library that summer after college, directly from college. Then there was an opening in a training class at Providence Public Library, so I went down there, took the training class, and then went into the library as an assistant in the business branch of the library, and I stayed there until I was married.

EC: Oh, I see. [09:00] What year was this in?

VMT: And that's in 1944.

EC: And do you have children?

VMT: Yes, I have two daughters. One who graduated from Pembroke in '68, and the other one who graduated from Colby.

EC: And where's Colby?

VMT: Colby is in Maine. Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

EC: How were the faculty-student relations? You were involved with student government.

VMT: Very good.

EC: Very good?

VMT: We had a lot of support from the faculty. We had what we called student-faculty teas, and they would come and just visit with us, and we'd bring up any concerns we had and talk with them informally. And they were very approachable. The classes were very small at Pembroke, so we had a chance to know the professors very well.

EC: And how long did the classes go? For a semester?

VMT: Yes.

EC: How much of a voice did the student government have [10:00]in what went on on campus?

VMT: Well they might get offended, but they had a large voice, but I think the administration was quite observant of what we were doing, and if we were going too, too far, and we would have been pulled back a little. But we were given some leeway.

EC: Why did you decide you wanted to do that?

VMT: I was interested in campus, ideas that people were putting forth, and I felt it would be fun to be in the middle of it and see what was going on, so.

EC: OK. I just noticed that you were president in your senior year. It was in the newspaper a lot, [overlapping dialogue; inaudible].

VMT: Well [inaudible] could go to other campuses and find out what they were doing.

EC: Oh really?

VMT: I mean, we had people come here and talk to us from different student organizations.

EC: What do you think of Pembroke in comparison to other schools at that time?

VMT: Well I thought we had a lot of advantages that just the women's colleges, which we would go to quite often, to Smith and Wellesley, because we had [11:00] a men's campus so close, and we had access to so much more, I thought, and then the women's campus [inaudible].

EC: So, did you see an advantage to being at a women's school?

VMT: Well I thought we had the best of both worlds, as all Pembrokers do, we had a women's college, we had everything that women's colleges had, we had our own organization, we had a chance to grow, and to lead them, and to be presidents, and [inaudible]. We really had an ideal situation, and then we had the advantages of a big university, like across the board.

EC: Have you seen the change, [overlapping dialogue; inaudible]?

VMT: I think it's going back to what it was. Now, I mean the women are gradually getting the Sarah Doyle Center, they're getting a women's center, where we had the whole college before, it's going right back to what it was.

EC: Yeah, yeah. How do you see that overall, perhaps you think the role of the women's college [12:00] has been – was very important, because it provided women with a chance to grow on their own, and how do you see that working now?

VMT: Well those which stayed women's colleges I think still give the women a very good chance to develop. And I think that the women feel they need this now, and I'm glad to see it's coming back, it's coming strong in favor.

EC: It is. What about Dean Morriss? Did you know Dean Morriss?

VMT: Yes, and she was a very fine lady. She was a patrician, she had very definite ideas, you didn't cross her unless you had very good reason and could back up – she would listen if you had a good case. But you didn't waste her time with foolishness.

EC: And was she – she was dean the whole time you were there?

VMT: Yes, yeah.

EC: I see. Was she approachable?

VMT: Oh yes, she was approachable. [13:00]

EC: I see.

VMT: But you approached her with awe, I think. She had a certain aura to her.

EC: What were your first impressions, would you say, coming in as a freshman?

VMT: Oh I loved everything about it.

EC: Yeah? [laughter]

VMT: I was very excited to be here, and to have the chance to study, there were so many subjects that you could take, there was –

EC: There was a large selection?

VMT: Yes. Well we had required subjects the first two years to work off certain requirements. But then you could go on and do what you chose with a major.

EC: What were the requirements?

VMT: Well you had to have history, you had to have biology, or a science, you could have biology or geology, something like that, so. And of course, you had regular English and language requirements. But they had a requirement in each of the different fields, so it gave you a chance to sample everything before you decided on your major. [14:00]

EC: I see. What – you were telling me before about the freshman [inaudible]. And what did that involve?

VMT: Oh, that involved the freshmen doing seniors' commands for a whole week, no matter what the commands were. And as I've told you, out here, we had to wear [inaudible] all week long, no matter where we were. [laughter] And some years, they had them carry umbrellas and wear black stockings, sometimes they'd have to write poems every day of the week, and there were various ideas that they came up with over the years for making the freshmen look a little bit ridiculous. [inaudible]. And then –

EC: Did it go on for a year like that?

VMT: No, just one week every year, they were allowed to do this. And then the freshmen had one day to have the seniors do whatever they wished them to do.

EC: Then what did you do?

VMT: I can't remember what I did. They must have been good to us. [laughter]

EC: Yeah. [15:00] Was there much dissention between [inaudible] years and freshmen, and what rules each class had?

VMT: Not in that way, I don't think. But I think the idea of you having a freshman sister and you, as a freshman sister, you looked up to the senior sister, because she had been through everything and could help you with any of the problems that you might have, and everything, and as a senior sister, you enjoyed doing the same thing for your freshman sister.

EC: Yeah, sure. [inaudible].

VMT: And that keeps a close bond, and you keep in touch with them, even over the years. I still write and send Christmas cards to my senior sister.

EC: You do? Oh, that's great. What about your freshman sister?

VMT: My freshman sister, I've lost track of. We did keep in touch for a while, but I haven't heard from her lately.

EC: Yeah. Oh, that's nice. How about the level of work? Was it challenging?

VMT: Yes, I thought so.

EC: Did you feel as if you came in prepared?

VMT: I felt that I was very well prepared, but the Classical High School people had a much better preparation, we all felt, than perhaps some of the other high schools around Rhode Island.

EC: And was Pawtucket a public high school?

VMT: It was. Classical was also a public high school, but they did a lot of training in Greek and Latin, and gave a very fine background [inaudible].

EC: How was the campus set up at that time?

VMT: Oh, we had Pembroke Hall at that time, and we had Miller dormitory and Metcalf dormitory. Then there was a building next to Pembroke Hall which was called East House, and that was another dormitory. There was a fourth dormitory, Sharpe House, where Sharpe House is today, but that was our cooperative dormitory. And that was the extent of the Pembroke campus at that time. Of course, we had Alumnae Hall, as it is now.

EC: And then the cafeteria?

VMT: And the cafeteria, and we had Sayles Hall, of course, where the gym is. That was still a gym.

EC: Oh really? [17:00] And what is a cooperative dormitory?

VMT: The girls were doing most of the work. They did the cooking and the cleaning, in return for some of their board.

EC: What is – I know that at some schools at that time, every student had a required amount of work to do, because of the Depression, because the colleges couldn't afford – and I know Brown kind of took care of Pembroke. But do you remember anything like that happening, any required tasks that...?

VMT: Well that was mostly in the dormitories, that wouldn't affect the city girls particularly.

EC: I see. How many – what was the ratio of city girls to dorm girls?

VMT: I would say it would probably be about three quarters city to one-quarter dormitory girls.

EC: Good. Let's see. What about socially? What kind of social activities were related to Pembroke when you –

VMT: Well, they've had the Junior Prom, that was the big event of the junior year. And then they had the [18:00] Senior Ivy Day, where we had the ivy chain – which most of the women's colleges had in those years. And they also had a Class Day, where they had a big production, and presented the class mascot, [inaudible]. Of course the usual fraternity dances on the hill, and the proms over there, but they were more of the formal dances in those days, where you had the long gowns and corsage.

EC: What did Ivy Day represent?

VMT: Ivy Day – it was a special day when the juniors planted a sprig of ivy, and the seniors had an ivy chain. And they had a whole program worked around that idea of bringing the ivy to the campus, so it would keep going. And we passed things down to the juniors so they would keep the ivy growing.

EC: Oh I see, because the Ivy League. [laughter] [19:00] Do you remember lots of traditions like that? Was it a traditional kind of atmosphere?

VMT: Yes, they seemed to have so many things that were looked forward to every year. And the Sophomore Masque was the big thing for sophomore year, and that had dancing and costumes, and –

EC: So it was basically –

VMT: At that particular time, freshmen would give the seniors May baskets. They always presented the May basket to the seniors on Masque Day.

EC: What kind of changes do you remember happening while you were in college? Did the outside world affect –

VMT: It would affect it from time to time, and as you would go downtown and see the men selling apples, and things of that sort. Also, there was that feeling of war coming, and they [20:00] wanted to have peace, and they would sell apples for peace, and there was that feeling on campus. I mean, we would want peace as a university community.

EC: Yeah. How did the war affect the campus? Or were you still there?

VMT: No, we weren't here at that time.

EC: OK.

VMT: It was the feeling of coming, that this was coming, you could feel it coming.

EC: In –

VMT: In '38, in –

EC: What kind of effects, did it scare people? Was there a patriotic feeling?

VMT: I think there was a patriotic feeling, very much so. They wanted to do what they could for America.

EC: Yeah. I mentioned before noticing that you had gone to New York on a conference. Do you remember anything about seeing Eleanor Roosevelt?

VMT: I'm afraid I don't, I should, because it was the start – it was such an excitement to be in New York for the first time. [21:00] That was the thing that I remembered well, that I was in New York.

EC: Yeah. Did you notice a difference, socially or in ethnic background, between the students at that time, or was it pretty much homogeneous?

VMT: It was pretty homogeneous.

EC: Were most of the students from Providence? I already asked you that.

VMT: No, I think that we had students from different countries, not many. There were some from China, and there was somebody from Turkey. There were a few, but they were not, you know, the way they are today, [inaudible].

EC: Yeah. What did you – how did you fit working into your scheme of [inaudible]? I mean like, [inaudible] work?

VMT: I didn't work while my children were small. [22:00] I stayed home until my older daughter was in high school, and my younger daughter in junior high. And then I was asked to go back to the Providence Public Library part-time again. And I did go back part-time so that I could be there for my husband and could be home with the children. And I worked evenings and Saturdays.

EC: Mm-hmm.

VMT: And I didn't go back to work full-time until my daughter [inaudible] prepare for her.

EC: Did you go to the John Hay?

VMT: No, I went back because they asked me to come back to the Providence Public Library so I went back there for a while, and then I came up to the John Hay Library from the Providence Public Library.

EC: Well what did your husband do?

VMT: He was in the bank, Industrial National Auto, with National Bank. Now it's – he worked in the Trust Department. In their offices.

EC: Was that affected by the war? [23:00]

VMT: Well of course, he had to be in the war, and he was a pilot in the Air Force during the war. This [inaudible] was interrupted too.

EC: When did he come back?

VMT: He came back when the war was over. At the end of the war, we were a little bit late getting our discharge papers, someone had lost them, so we didn't get home as early as some of the others did. But we were in Pensacola, and came home from Pensacola.

EC: I see. What did you do in the John Hay?

VMT: Well I first went to the John Hay, it was for purpose of being [inaudible] Pembroke archive.

EC: Oh, you're kidding. [inaudible]. That's great.

VMT: So we were trying to gather everything, and I had everything in one room, I had everything all set, and then they decided that they were having no more Pembroke College, so

the archives all went back into the Brown University archives again. They are still [24:00] in their own separate section, but they are part of the archives now. [overlapping dialogue; inaudible].

EC: What would you say the major aspects of your life outside of class, in particular academics with [inaudible]?

VMT: Well I think academics and the association with the organizations that we joined were the prime things. You didn't have as much time, because you were spending quite a bit of your time going back and forth commuting. But I think you tried to work – and if you were interested in an organization, that you would try to stay [inaudible] so that you could take part [inaudible] of course it was perfectly safe in those days to go home at night on a streetcar and not have any worries about it.

EC: [inaudible] streetcars. Were there sororities while you were here?

VMT: No, those went out long before I came. [25:00]

EC: Where is that organization based out of?

VMT: Mostly [inaudible] association.

EC: Did those girls join groups?

VMT: Yes, some of them, as you can see from the yearbook. Some of them were in several organizations, some of them maybe one or two [inaudible].

EC: I see, yeah. How much coeducation was there between Pembroke – did Brown students ever come over to Pembroke when you were here?

VMT: Not that I remember, no. We would go to the Brown campus for everything. And I don't remember any of them coming here.

EC: Was that very formal?

VMT: Oh, it was more of a high school type class than it is today. It was the professor that lectured, although depending on the professor, he would have more informal groups. [26:00] But some were very formal, and [inaudible] lecture hall, and sat and took notes.

EC: Was there discussion?

VMT: Yes, in some – then again, it depends on the professor, whether you had an open discussion. Some professors were more formal than others.

EC: And who was your favorite?

VMT: I had a Latin professor who really was very good, and talked me into working in the field of Latin. And he was also interested in libraries, and started me working in the library also. And that was Professor Benjamin Clough.

EC: Do you feel as if what you learned while you were at Pembroke was applicable to your –

VMT: Oh yeah, it was very good.

EC: Where – how?

VMT: Well it gave me a practical experience in libraries, for one thing. So that was very good. And then the Latin background, working with books, was a big help.

EC: [27:00] Do you [inaudible]? Whether your life [inaudible]?

VMT: Well they were prepared for life, however not a profession, per se. But it gives you such a good background in courses in music, courses in art, it gives you a chance to explore different fields and enrich your own life. And –

EC: So you – how have you seen [inaudible] change?

VMT: I think there's more focus on professional studies now, today, than – we didn't think of it as a professional [inaudible] any idea we could.

EC: That was [inaudible].

VMT: Yeah. That's the way I felt, [inaudible].

EC: Yeah, yeah. Were – did you feel that people were genuinely enthusiastic about learning?

VMT: I think so. I think so. It was a privilege.

EC: Right, it wasn't taken for granted. [28:00] [inaudible].

VMT: I think [inaudible] it was an honor and no doubt there were some that felt that way too, but [inaudible] were there because their mothers wanted them to be [inaudible] education.

EC: What were some of the problems [inaudible]?

VMT: [inaudible] but I can't remember anything [inaudible] at the moment, I know there was much concern over our [inaudible].

EC: [laughter]

VMT: But I don't recall a world-changing problem.

EC: So, what was required of you outside of class? What [inaudible]?

VMT: No, just your own doing, whatever you wish to do outside of class.

EC: Did you work at all? [29:00]

VMT: No, I didn't happen to, because of the commuting, it would have been difficult.

EC: What do you think was the social view of women who went to college? Was it an unusual thing? What was it?

VMT: Well, it wasn't the usual thing. I don't think that many people went to college from high school in the Depression years. And so, it was probably a little bit more unusual for women to go to college.

EC: [inaudible]?

VMT: Well when you came into the college community, you were so wrapped up in it that that was your life. And you didn't really have a life outside of the college community.

EC: Yeah, yeah. And do you feel like that opened up anything for you after college that otherwise wouldn't have been available?

VMT: Oh yeah, it definitely did open some things up [30:00] to be able to be part of that kind of college community, and to come back to it, to live near enough to the college to come back over the years, and [inaudible].

EC: Were there [inaudible]?

VMT: Yeah, there are many of my classmates are still around. And we get together and enjoy it, and enjoy the college [inaudible].

EC: [inaudible]. Would you say your education was helpful, or [inaudible; loud buzz]?

- End of Track 1 -

Track 2

EC: Is there anything you would want to change?

VMT: Well, I might –

EC: In regards to your actions –

VMT: – like to have lived on campus.

EC: Really?

VMT: It would have made it a little easier, I think. Because I think you did have to miss certain things, you couldn't always stay in the area for what was going on, and I think you had to miss a certain amount by traveling back and forth.

EC: Did you go – did you miss some communication that way, or getting to know people?

VMT: A little bit, but I think we might know the dormitory girls better, although I had very good friends in the dormitories, and would stay overnight and visit.

EC: Oh really?

VMT: Yes.

EC: And that was all right?

VMT: That was all – they could have guests once in a while, they could have girls. And I felt that I – in my activities, I became better acquainted with them too, through the organizations.

EC: OK. And how did you see the dorms? Were they –

VMT: Well we thought they were very lucky girls to be able to stay. And of course, it was a very formal [01:00] atmosphere in the dormitories, they had a house mother and they had [inaudible] and proper dining.

EC: Oh, they did?

VMT: [inaudible].

EC: This was down in Alumnae Hall?

VMT: No, this was in Miller and Metcalf.

EC: In the dormitories.

VMT: Because the Sharpe House was more informal because it was the cooperative house.

EC: What is Sharpe House? What is –

VMT: Well it's the education department now, I'm not sure what's in it. But it's [inaudible].

EC: [inaudible].

VMT: And [inaudible].

EC: OK, I think I know what it is. [inaudible].

VMT: It was the education department, I'm not sure what it is now.

EC: But you – are there many of the old buildings?

VMT: There are quite a few of them. Yeah, there are.

EC: Providence is such a city of old houses. There's lots of, many old houses... It's nice. What do you think could have been different in the college, in the way they ran it? Do you think there could there have been any improvements, or –

VMT: [02:00] Well perhaps there could have been more input from the students as a whole, although we felt that we did good for our concerns in student government chapel and take them from there, after we had the student consensus to the dean. But it was more of an autocratic regime, I think.

EC: [inaudible] yeah. What about over the years, have you – what major changes have really struck you? You said going through – being here when there have been the changes going through the '50s, and then the '60s, when they were – Pembroke and Brown wereco-educational, and –

VMT: I think seeing men's dormitories on the Pembroke campus. [overlapping dialogue; inaudible]. [laughter]

EC: Coeducational, yeah.

[siren in background]

VMT: Siren?

EC: I don't know.

VMT: Sounds like it.

EC: What are your [03:00] – say your best memories from Pembroke? Do you remember anything in particular?

VMT: Well I remember the friends that I made, that was so important, and the fun classes, and the professors, and all of the extracurricular activities that we had fun with.

EC: Do you remember anything in particular?

VMT: I think it's just the whole thing that was so wonderful. Each year, you enjoyed whatever was the big thing of that year. And you just hated to see senior year come and leave, because it meant so much to you and it was a family, it was very close, the classes were small, you knew everyone practically in the college, of all four classes.

EC: Yeah, yeah. You felt good going out into the world after you graduated?

VMT: Oh yes, you felt like you had such a good background that you were ready to face whatever you had to face.

EC: So, [inaudible]. Is there anything else [04:00] you can think of? How often – did you travel at all? Did you get off campus?

VMT: Not very often. We were insular, we stayed around almost – once in a while, [inaudible].

EC: Right, right.

VMT: [inaudible] stay there and made this our [inaudible] lives and the focus of everything.

EC: So overall, positive?

VMT: Very positive. I loved every minute of it.

EC: So I don't remember when I turned on the tape. Do – I forgot, do you remember what affected you in changes throughout the '50s and '60s, like here on campus? What struck you the most, besides seeing men on campus? Do you remember changing attitudes ,perhaps, or?

VMT: Well, of course we saw the attitudes change when – the fear [05:00] about the Vietnam War. And that was a different change in the way that people felt at that time. And that was very noticeable.

EC: What kind of a change?

VMT: Well, the feeling that they – it was so hopeless at first, what can we do about this? And then we gradually saw them work their way through to feeling that they could do something, it was interesting to see how the students reacted to it all, and what measures they took to express their disapproval, and [inaudible] front row seats.

EC: Yeah, okay. That was the most striking change for you?

VMT: I think that was the most striking change through the '60s, yeah.

EC: How do you compare the level of education now with what you learned?

VMT: Well I think [06:00] they do learn a lot more, and I think the students now have much more capacity to learn, absolutely. I think they expanded their horizons a lot more.

EC: Really?

VMT: I really think they do more perhaps in a year than we did in four years.

EC: In what way?

VMT: I think they have learned so much in their high schools, they're more prepared to go on to, you know, to go into things in real depth [inaudible], because they have a better background in [inaudible].

EC: Yeah.

VMT: But for our time, I think we got, you know, good training. And I think they are doing much more in expanding the whole program.

EC: You said you noticed that it was kind of going back to the [inaudible] of having a women's center on the ground. Why do you think that is?

VMT: Well I think perhaps the women missed the chance to have more of a say in what they were doing in organizations. They seemed to be relegated to secretary or something, [inaudible] men's organizations?

EC: Do you think so, even now?

VMT: Now, I don't think [07:00] they are now, but I think there was a period in there where they – that was all they were allowed to do. [inaudible]. They were conscious of it, and they wanted to run the organization the way they had done when it was just a women's college.

EC: Yeah, that's definitely a good point about women's colleges. But why do you think that [inaudible] still now? This is really good. [inaudible].

VMT: Yes, it is, it's wonderful to have a house that is just for the women, and for women's studies, and now we have a woman professor who is the Nancy Duke Lewis professor, Joan Scott.

EC: Joan Scott, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

VMT: And that is something that we didn't have, we had one woman professor who taught biology when I was here, so there were very few women professors.

EC: Oh really?

VMT: Very few. It was entirely a male-dominated college, in teaching.

EC: Pembroke was as well?

VMT: [08:00] Yes, because we didn't use the Brown campus. We had the same math class here. They came, they taught classes over on the men's campus, and came to Pembroke to teach classes here.

EC: What was the feeling about that behavior, was it noticed?

VMT: It was just taken for granted. It's just the way it was. And you had the advantage of the [inaudible].

EC: What do you think [inaudible]?

VMT: I don't remember now, because I wasn't back at the college from that transition was made.

EC: Yeah. OK. I think we can wrap it up. Okay. Thank you.

VMT: Well, it's very interesting. I hope that you have success with all your interviews.

EC: Thank you.

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