

Transcript -- Susan Semonoff

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Interviewer: Julia Hyun

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Track 1

Julia Hyun: [00:00] This is Julia Hyun about to interview Susan Semonoff at her office in the Medical Center of the University of California at San Francisco. The date is March 31st, 1988, 3:30 pm. OK, why don't we start off with some information about your family background, and your parents, and some of the motivations for going to Pembroke.

Susan Semonoff: OK. My parents were both born in Providence and my parents both went to Brown. My father graduated in 1939 and then went to Harvard Law School. My mother went to Pembroke for two years and then transferred to Simmons when she could afford to go to school away from Providence, and graduated from there in 1942. [01:00] And my paternal grandfather had graduated from Brown in 1911. I grew up in Pawtucket and my parents were both very active in Brown alumni activities, and I had never been that interested in going to Pembroke myself; I thought I would prefer to go somewhere away to school. And then when it was time to apply to college I applied to Pembroke and a number of other places, and Pembroke was, I think, the best school that I applied to, and was accepted, and I was able to live in a dormitory, and decided in the end that that was where I wanted to go.

JS: Oh, great. So, [02:00] because a lot of the other women that I've talked to said they commuted back and forth, but you actually lived on campus?

SS: Mm-hmm. Yup. Right from freshman year.

JS: What was your freshman year like? What was your first impression?

SS: It was pretty overwhelming. I think the first thing that I realized was that academically I was nowhere near as well prepared as most of the students in my class.

JS: Did you go to public schools in Providence?

SS: Mm-hmm. Actually I grew up and went to school in Pawtucket, not in Providence. I went to Pawtucket West High School and it wasn't then, and I'm sure it isn't now, a particularly challenging academic institution. So I felt like I was at a real disadvantage when I got to Pembroke academically and I was never [03:00] a particularly good student. I got more involved in social and extracurricular activities than I did really in becoming stimulated academically.

JS: So what sort of classes and stuff did you take at Pembroke?

SS: I majored in American Civilization and fulfilled what was in the basic distribution requirements [laughter] and stayed away -- the most scientific course that I took was psychology. That was how I fulfilled my science distribution requirement. I think you had to fulfill seven out of the eight distribution requirements and I didn't fulfill the [04:00] physical science requirement; that was the one that I skipped. And in the life sciences I took psychology.

JS: So what was the atmosphere like going to school at that time, in the '60s, and also at Brown and Pembroke?

SS: A lot of different things occurred to me when I was thinking about this and looking over the questions on the list. I think that the impact of the Vietnam War protests was probably one of the biggest influences on the experience that people in my class -- or people there at our time -- experienced. One of the things that looking back on the experience, and I think even then, was really [05:00] remarkable was the difference in rules for men and women students, and that changed somewhat during the time that we were there, I think partly influenced by the general protest environment. But now thinking back over things that we were faced with, 10 o'clock

weeknight curfews freshman year, only I think 11:30 one night on the weekends, a limited number of overnights --

JS: And the sign outs?

SS: Oh yeah, always had to sign out if you're going to be out after I don't even remember what the hour was.

JS: Who did you report to for the sign out system? Were there people in the dorms that --

SS: There was a, like, a time clock [06:00] case. There wasn't a clock there, but it was just a case on the wall, and everybody had a card with their name on it, and if you were out I don't remember if you flipped it over or what. I do remember if you were away overnight it had a red stripe on it that would be showing. And then somebody checked the board at the hour that you were supposed to be in to make sure that everybody who had signed out had signed back in. I don't remember if that was students who were responsible for checking that. There was a guard in most of the dorms. I think it must have been a student, but I can't really remember. At least when I was a freshman and I can't remember how far through, [07:00] you had to wear a skirt to dinner every night. We had sit-down dinners, no male guests allowed, except Sunday dinner, which was at noontime and I think one evening during the week you could have male guests for dinner. When you went on the Brown campus you had to wear a skirt or if you wore pants you had to wear a long coat over your pants. No blue jeans. And none of those restrictions were imposed on Brown students, only on Pembroke.

JS: Wow.

SS: Yeah, it's pretty amazing.

JS: So that was just --

SS: Oh, no, we couldn't live off campus.

JS: Oh really?

SS: No one.

JS: [08:00] But the men could right?

SS: Yes, although not -- I'm not sure at what point in their academic career they could live off campus. I think all freshmen had to live on campus, and then I think seniors definitely were allowed to live off campus, but I don't know about sophomores and juniors.

JS: I was wondering, because I was reading in one of the Pembroke records about sign outs to men's apartments or something, and there was this huge thing about that the university said that's not what we meant when we said you could sign out overnight [laughter] and, you know, Pembroke's were saying, "Well, but, you know, why not?" And so it was this big thing about debates back and forth.

SS: Right. That was definitely not allowed. The whole concept of the university being in loco parentis [09:00] was real important. That was the environment. Your parents wouldn't let you stay out overnight at a man's apartment, so they certainly wouldn't.

JS: So the whole atmosphere at Pembroke was -- were the women fairly secluded away did you feel at all or...?

SS: No, not really. We had all of the classes were coed at that time, except for gym classes was the only thing that wasn't, everything else was coed. There weren't any restrictions on classes. But eating was segregated. You had to have a meal contract and you had to eat in a Pembroke dining hall. I think you had to eat [10:00] in the dining hall in your dorm, but when we were there, there was only the Andrews Dining Hall. There wasn't any dining room -- whatever that dining room is now between (inaudible) whatever. That dining room is new. I think it might have

been there possibly by our senior year, but when we started I don't think that that dining room was open. I'm not sure. Anyway, but you had to eat on the Pembroke campus.

JS: And were all the counseling systems and stuff separate too? Women's advisors, and deans, and so forth?

SS: Women's deans --

JS: Academic deans and stuff?

SS: Yeah. I don't remember [11:00] academic advisors, whether the freshman -- I don't remember. I don't think there were different advisors for freshman women than there were for freshman men, but I don't really remember that.

JS: So what were the relations between the Brown men and Pembroke women like? Because I was just reading this -- this was from an article, I guess, that was in a 1966 paper, *The Record*, and the article was entitled "Pembroke's Identity Crisis," and it read, "*The Herald* has launched a broadside attack upon Pembroke, which underestimates and misconceives the essence of this college." And then it just went on and on, and it talked about how Pembroke seemed to be having an identity crisis every couple of years, and that the [12:00] men were taking advantage about that.

SS: That's interesting. [laughter] I think it was very variable. I think that partly because there was such an imbalance between the number of men students and women students that some Brown men probably didn't know any or very many Pembrokers at all. And on the other hand there were some crowds, which were pretty mixed between men and women, and I don't know exactly what characterized those. There certainly were a lot of people whose stereotype was the Pembrokers were all grind, and that they were all intellectuals, and that [13:00] if you wanted to have fun on a date you should definitely not date a Pembroker, that you should go to one of the junior colleges around, and went to Wheaton. I don't really remember a lot of where else they

went; there's some junior colleges in Newport and around other places that people -- I guess some went to Boston.

I think most or almost all of my women friends dated Brown men, but because of the imbalance I would say that most Brown men probably didn't date Pembroke women.

JS: So what was the social life like for Pembroke women?

SS: [14:00] I always found it to be very good, but I think it was variable too. There were regular mixers Friday nights. Are the gates still there?

JS: Mm-hmm.

SS: There were gate mixers, and there were -- so there were mixers at Pembroke that were just open to anybody, and I can't really remember, there must have been mixers at Brown that people went to, or dated people that they met in class, or in some extracurricular activities, although some of those were separate. You know, having two student governments, two newspapers, two yearbooks, separate athletic facilities, but then there were a lot of things that people worked on together. Lots of women, [15:00] or some women anyway, were on the staff of the *Brown Daily Herald*, and *WBUR*, and stuff like that, you know, a lot of the other Brown activities that women participated in or that were for everybody.

JS: I know you were involved -- you, let's see, replaced Laurel Limpus as president of the SGA. And then right after that there was one other term, I guess, and then they merged, the SGA and the [CAN?] Club merged, so could you tell me a little about that? Like, what it was like being president of SGA and, you know, what was going on then, because there were so many...

SS: Yeah. I don't really remember a lot of what the issues were. I think that most or many of the issues related to social, [16:00] you know, were sort of socially-oriented: parietals, and curfews, and all the -- some of the things that we talked about earlier. But I really can't remember what any of the other substantive or non-substantive issues might have been. I know I met on a regular basis with Dean Pierrel, and I'm sure I had my wisdom issues to discuss with her, but I really

can't remember what any of them were, and I don't have -- I mean, I never saved anything that I could look back on and see, you know, refresh my memory. I know that there was a lot of feeling at that time that Pembroke shouldn't be separate, that we were part of the university, and that [17:00] the idea of a separate women's administration was antiquated. And it's funny, I think at the time I was really in favor of the merger of Brown and Pembroke, and I think subsequently I had real second thoughts about it as I thought back on the benefits that I had from not -- from having our own activities and not competing with men, given the fact that in our society women are socialized and acculturated to sort of take a back seat in coeducational activities. And I think one of the reasons that that was true, and people felt that it was true at Pembroke, was that women were more academically-oriented, it was harder to get into Pembroke, and that was certainly something that people focused on, [18:00] both men and women students. The women tended to do better academically than the men, and just the imbalance in numbers, because there were three times as many men students in each class than there were women students.

So I think I've sort of gone through cycles in what I think about not having a separate identity for Pembroke. I think it's wonderful that there's a comparable number of men and women students, and I'm sure that that has changed the environment even more than having just a same role administrative structure and housing structure, probably more than anything else. And I'm sure that that makes opportunities a lot more available and just the fact that expectations for women have changed [19:00] so much in the last 20 years that I'm sure that doesn't happen as much now as it did back then.

JS: What do you see as the greatest change for women in the past 20 years?

SS: At Brown or in general?

JS: In general.

SS: Change in expectations. That when I went to college and when I graduated, the expectation was that women would get married, have families, and be primarily responsible for raising them. And while I think that's certainly still true for lots of people, there's much more of an expectation now that women will have independent careers, and while they might also have

families, and be equally or primarily responsible for those families, the expectation is very different.

JS: I'm just wondering if -- this is kind of for [20:00] my own benefit for my project -- but do you think that the changing expectations have put more pressures on women or has it made things easier?

SS: Different pressures. Pressure to succeed professionally, financially, as opposed to succeed in getting a man. I used to think early in my career that I had a lot more flexibility and I was a lot more relaxed about my accomplishments professionally, because I knew that I wasn't solely, primarily responsible for [21:00] the family finances in perpetuity, [laughter] but I was for a while. And a lot of the men that I worked with when I started out had the expectation that for their whole lives they would be primarily responsible for the financial security of their family. And I think that put pressure on a lot of them that was very different from the kind of pressure that I had. And maybe that means that it's different for men now too, because their expectation is that they won't be solely responsible for their family's finances, assuming that they marry, but that they and their wife will share the responsibility, and that they will hopefully have balancing cycles in their careers. So I don't know. I think that the pressures are different. Certainly the professional [22:00] pressures are greater, but I don't know. I guess I would used to have said yes, that there's definitely more pressure on women now than there was then, but I think that it's probably balanced by other changes.

JS: So what did you do after you graduated? What sort of work did you go into?

SS: I was a banker. I went to work at what was then Industrial National Bank, and it's now Fleet Bank, in their management training program. When I was graduating I was interested in finding a job. I didn't have any particular career aspirations. I had never been particularly interested in business or finance. In fact, I just remembered this, I had [laughter] kind of thought I would like to be a librarian [23:00] and looked into some opportunities both at Brown, where I had worked in Rockefeller Library part-time as a student, and also I guess at the Providence Public Library, as well as looking into banking -- partly because a classmate, who had graduated the year before,

had gone to work at this bank, and banks were one of the kinds of companies that recruited at Pembroke -- and ended up deciding that, because I was getting married and needed to support me and my husband, that I would take the job that offered the most money. And I knew I didn't have to do it forever -- medical school is only four years -- and if I didn't like it I could quit then and do something that [24:00] interested me more. As it turned out I liked it a lot. My husband and I lived in Providence for two years while he finished up at Brown in the medical program, and then moved to Boston so that he could do his last two years of medical school, and I got a job in a bank there -- different kind of job, but also in a bank -- and discovered I loved it.

JS: So did you get married right out of college?

SS: Right. The day after graduation.

JS: Oh really?

SS: Yeah, while all our friends were still there. Yup.

JS: So, let's see, and you continued in banking in Boston, and then?

SS: Four years ago we moved to San Francisco. We had stayed in Boston while Steve finished medical school, did his internship, and medical residency, and a [25:00] neurology residency, and a couple of fellowships, and became a junior faculty member at Harvard Medical School, and all those times when he had opportunities to change -- you know, when he was changing where he was with each residency and fellowship, we continued to stay in Boston so that I could stay at the bank. A couple times we considered other opportunities, but not really too seriously, and decided that we would stay in Boston, because I really liked what I was doing, and I was doing well, and I didn't really want to move. And then ultimately I decided that I would be willing to move and he decided that it was time [26:00] for him to move. So he looked around and decided that an opportunity here in San Francisco was the best one for him and we came out here, a mighty move.

JS: Yeah, it was a big move.

SS: And I decided that I did not -- that I'd like to try something other than banking. I had been a trustee of a small hospital outside of Boston for a couple of years, that one of my customers at the bank was chairman of the board, and because I'm not an academic person, but wanted to learn more about healthcare financing, I decided that I would look for a job in a hospital out here and see whether there was some position where I could use my financial skills and learn about healthcare. [27:00] And I fell into this job here through a friend of a friend and learned what I wanted to learn about healthcare. I started out as assistant to the director of finance in the medical center, and did sort of general financial projects for her, and after about six months she took on the responsibility for some personnel activities and didn't want to have another person reporting to her, so made me responsible for the specific activities that she had taken over. And then since that time I've added on a number of other related responsibilities. We've been working with a consultant for a couple of years on a program to improve our service to [28:00] patients, and physicians, and other staff members, and I have a lot of the responsibility for coordinating that.

JS: That's great.

SS: It's pretty interesting.

JS: OK, I think I'm going to turn this tape over, because it's about to run.

Track 2

JS: [00:00] OK, so we were talking about your work and your job, but going back to your college years at Pembroke, let's see. These are some of the big social issues, which seem to just come up again and again in the newspapers that I was looking through and I was just wondering what you remembered of it. First of all, there were the changes in the SGA constitution and so forth, and then also I guess there was a big issue about a student who was dismissed and the complaint on the part of the students was that it was an academic penalty for a social offense, and the whole issue --

SS: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) student who spent the weekend at her boyfriend's apartment?

JS: Yeah, I think so. Right. [01:00] And it led to marches on the dean's house, and demonstrations, and all that. So I was just wondering if all of this was sort of the events, which led up to the formation of the McGrath Committee and -- or what do you remember about all of these things that were happening?

SS: Gosh...not really a lot. Now that you mention that, I remembered the student who had been expelled for spending the night at her boyfriend's apartment, and it was even before the year began. It was during freshman week and she wasn't a freshman. But I didn't remember how much of a ruckus it had caused. And I don't [02:00] know if that's -- I assume that's one of the things that led to the formation of the McGrath Committee, but I don't really remember the specifics. I remember a couple of other incidents, and I think one at least predated this, because it happened during my freshman year, when a couple of Brown students and a number of RISD students were arrested by Providence police for possession of marijuana. And they were expelled from school and that was a big flap before drug use was at all common by anybody. Pretty amazing to look back on it and what a ruckus that created. That was my freshman year though. And the other one incident that I remember [03:00] was a student -- I don't remember which year it was -- who had an illegal abortion and started hemorrhaging in the dorm. And I don't remember any of the details of it, I just sort of remember the rumors flying and the stories going around, because at that time premarital sex was definitely not -- it may have been common, but it certainly wasn't spoken about and it was something you really tried to hide.

JS: So it seems just from the things that I've been reading about those couple of years -- I don't know if this is just the newspapers, you know, the student newspapers are always stressing this or not, but -- it kept talking about this [04:00] polarization between students and faculty -- or administration and --

SS: And faculty? Or administration and students?

JS: Administration and students, actually. So and that there was just this real pulling away and division between the two. So let's see, the committee was formed -- was it formed in 1967?

SS: I think it was in 1967.

JS: And it was appointed by President Heffner at the time?

SS: Mm-hmm.

JS: How many other students were on the committee?

SS: There were -- I know Peter Billings was on it. And maybe, possibly one other student. Let's see...[05:00] there was a graduate student, [Vikram Tashjian?], who was also, with his wife, a resident fellow in Miller. I don't know how he was chosen, but Peter and I were each president of the Student Government Association. And then there were three deans -- Pembroke dean, Brown dean, and the dean of the graduate school -- and then three faculty members, including Peter [McGraw?], who was the chair of the committee. I'd really forgotten all about this. I can [06:00] sort of picture in my mind a lot of the meetings, where people came and gave testimony [laughter] (inaudible)

JS: So what would you say were the events, which led to -- was it just a general feelings on campus overall that there was just, like, a need to review the regulations and so forth dealing with student conduct?

SS: Well, I think there was a feeling among the students that the nature of the rules was not appropriate anymore. A lot of the feeling that it was appropriate to question rules like this [07:00] must have been related to the concerns that people had about the war in Vietnam and the fact -- just sort of the whole atmosphere of protest and concern about still being treated like children when our fellow students and peers were being sent off to war to die. I think that

probably the disparity between the regulations governing women students and men students probably played a part in that as well.

JS: What do you see as a significance of the committee's reports and recommendations then and also [08:00] in retrospect?

SS: I guess at the time it was the recognition that Brown had to change as societal expectations for young people were changing. I think within a fairly short time the changes were very radical. And I have a sister who graduated from Brown I guess six years after I did, and by the time she finished I think that the whole social environment was entirely different, just in that short span of time, that things really loosened up. Students were given much more responsibility for their own conduct and much less university responsibility for [09:00] their social lives.

JS: Just as, you know, looking back at that time and looking at it from my perspective, it was sort of the beginning of the end of Pembroke, you know, as a separate entity from Brown, because it seems like a lot of the clubs -- well, when the two student governments merged, and you already had coed classes, and, you know, just in name only were they being separated sort of, so...

SS: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I mean, really the differences were housing, and a separate admissions process, and a separate administrative structure. I guess I would say that the student governments, while there were two student governments, student government's not a very powerful institution anyway, so I don't think -- while it was symbolic of [10:00] having a separate administrative structure, I don't think that that's necessarily what -- I wouldn't think that that had a big impact on the end of Pembroke as a separate entity, but I could be wrong.

JS: What sort of impact did the report have? I mean, how was it received by the school?

SS: I have no recollection.

JS: Yeah. I might have to go back and look at the papers after (inaudible).

SS: Yeah, I think it was printed in full. I can't remember what year, but I'd have to go back and read the editorials, and even that's only one perspective. I don't know. I really [11:00] don't remember what people -- you know, if I kind of speculate I would say that students would have thought it didn't go far enough and the administration thought it went too far, but I really don't remember. It's funny, because I'm sure at the time I felt like it was really crucial and now I never think about it.

JS: So were you involved in anything else besides the student government and this committee?

SS: Let's see, maybe it says in here...I guess I wasn't on the (inaudible) staff, [12:00] since I'm not listed there. I had part time jobs. I worked in the library and I worked as a secretary in the art department, and had my social life...

JS: It's really funny, I was looking at the pictures of spring weekend, and it's still the same.

SS: Is it? [laughter] I had been a junior counselor my junior year...

JS: Do you remember the Campus Action Council?

SS: Yeah, I was just looking at this. [13:00] Nope. I think it must have been a radical organization though, was it?

JS: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

SS: Yeah.

JS: Because they were just in the papers constantly. And I think they organized the delegations from Brown to go on marches, and the protests, and demonstrations in Washington DC and so forth. Oh, there was this really funny one that I read about -- I don't know if it was the CAC or not, but another group protesting the Egyptology department or something, or the building having been bought by bad money or dirty money, so it was really funny.

SS: Oh, that's great. I think I was involved in giving tours to prospective students. [14:00] But I can't really remember any other -- let's see if I wrote anything down that I missed here, things I was involved in...I don't think so. Going to class, studying, working, finding a husband, student government...

JS: Do you remember anything about the Pembroke traditions? You know, what is it, May Day? Or May Queens?

SS: May Queens.

JS: And [15:00] gosh, what else is there? The sophomore masques and stuff?

SS: Yeah, I was part of the group that did the sophomore mask -- oh, I was on the freshman week committee when I was a sophomore and not sure if I was any other years after that. There was the father-daughter weekend freshman and junior year, I think, and the mother-daughter weekend sophomore and senior year. My mother and I won the prize I think sophomore year for the mother and daughter who looked most alike. But I have it, but I think my mother still has a Pembroke mug about two inches high that we got as our prize.

JS: Do you remember [16:00] the decision to stop with the May Day tradition in '68?

SS: No, uh-uh. Is that when it ended?

JS: That's when it ended.

SS: No, I don't.

JS: When you think back to Pembroke what are the things that stick out in your mind the most? Or just your college years in general?

SS: My friends, the Vietnam War...I guess those are really the two things that stick out the most. Not academics, unfortunately. [laughter] Oh, let's see, I just remember something else, speaking of academics, which I'm not sure what the connection is. The famous blackout in 1966, in the fall. There was a big electric blackout on the whole east coast, and we were without electricity from, I don't know, maybe 4:30 or 5:00 in the afternoon until 10:00 or 11:00 at night. So we went to a party in someone's apartment. [laughter] That was an unusual experience.

JS: What was -- Dean Pierrel?

SS: [18:00] Mm-hmm.

JS: What was she like? You said that you had to deal with her every once in a while because of the SGA and stuff.

SS: I don't remember that specifically what she was like, kind of remote, although later I found her to be very warm, but when I was a student I remember thinking that she was remote. That really all of the administration and the few -- I think there were a few single house mothers -- just sort of just real stereotypical of what you would think of administrators at a women's college, sort of the idea of a bunch of frustrated old maids. [19:00] And I don't know how much -- rigid, frustrated, old maids -- and I don't know how much of that would be an accurate perception if I knew them as adults and how much of it was just the conflict that was inherent in the relationship that the structure set up at that time, and the idea that they were responsible for us rather than that we were responsible for ourselves. I don't know how much of that is still -- it's part of any institutional structure. It's certainly, you know, a little bit a part of any enterprise where there's management and non-management. People don't like to be told what to do no matter how old they are, whether there's any reason to think that the people telling them what to do might know better. [20:00] But I think that the administrators in general didn't really serve as effective role models. They were mostly older, they were mostly traditional, they were pretty rigid, they didn't -- at least they don't reflect what I would think today would have been good role models. And maybe for their time they were appropriate, but certainly if they drew back on them today I wouldn't think that. I think that there were a few people -- I mentioned before the

Tashjians, who were the [21:00] resident fellows in Miller. I think that they served as good role models. Another couple that were resident fellows, who were both graduate students, [Nate and Nan Summer?], I think were pretty good role models of what turned out to be a better model, or sort of the more typical model for people at Pembroke at that time.

JS: So in what ways were they good role models?

SS: They were married couples, who had some balance in their relationship, both professional in some way as opposed to the older administrators who either weren't married or, [22:00] if they were married, seemed to have a much more traditional type of relationship. I guess that's my bias.

JS: What do you remember of graduation?

SS: That I was getting married. [laughter]

JS: Oh gosh, that's right.

SS: (inaudible) This is great. Here's the picture of them. Do these women represent a role model to you?

JS: They look a little old.

SS: Yup.

JS: It was really funny, when I was looking through [23:00] the newspapers and stuff, every time they had an article about Dean Pierrel they had this one picture --

SS: It's really awful, isn't it? [laughter]

JS: And they just had it along with every article, the same picture and she's, like, making a face, right?

SS: Yup, bad news. I remember, you know, my memories of graduation are all tied up with my memories of getting married at the same time, and sort of balancing both priorities, both activities, but I remember it as being a lot of fun. I had -- living in Providence particularly -- had stayed around, I think, all the other years to go to campus dance and to go to graduation, [24:00] so it was something that I really looked forward to, and participated in, and really enjoyed. Sort of bitter sweet saying goodbye to all our friends.

JS: Have you kept in touch with many of them?

SS: Intermittently, some better than others. But I still feel very close to most of them, and I feel like when I do see them that we can pick up pretty fast right where we left off. I've been doing some fundraising for our 20th reunion and when I've talked to people on the phone there's an immediate connection, which I think is really nice.

JS: What was it like at the 10th for you when you went?

SS: The thing that I remember the most -- [25:00] I don't know so much about the 10 year, but --

JS: Or any of the reunions.

SS: -- certainly the 5th is the one I remember the best. People were caricatures of themselves. What I found was that I remembered one thing about people, or the thing that I remembered most about them was their most pronounced characteristic, even five or ten years later, which was very interesting -- mannerisms, or attitudes, or looks, or whatever. Come in. (side conversation; inaudible) [26:00] Whatever it was that kind of characterized people was the thing that stood out in seeing them again after such a long time.

JS: What did you see with the women? What kinds of things had they gone on to do? Like, as a class, how would you characterize that, if you even can?

SS: A mix of -- I would say I guess it's that sort of time of transition. A lot of people went into professional pursuits and a lot of people seemed to be mothers and housewives, but I guess more than I would have expected -- [27:00] certainly more than I would have expected at the beginning of freshman year -- pursued professional activities, pursued careers, and I guess fewer became academics than I might have thought at the beginning of freshman year. What do you think the mix is in your class?

JS: Of?

SS: What people will be doing?

JS: Gosh, I don't know. I mean, everyone I talk to has definite ideas of what they want as far as a career goes, and I think that's one characteristic in my generation. And marriage is something really far off for almost everybody that I talk to. They can't really imagine even thinking about marriage at this point, [28:00] you know. So it seems like career first and marriage later is kind of the trend.

SS: There's a bunch of pictures in here of demonstrations.

JS: I read in one of the papers that Martin Luther King spoke at Brown in '67, I think at the spring weekend or something. Do you remember that? I just saw that and I just thought oh my gosh, you know, wow.

SS: I don't remember. Gosh, that's terrible.

Track 3

JS: [00:00] This is tape two of the interview with Susan Semonoff, March 31st, 1988. (break in audio) Well is there anything else that you can think of or you'd like to --

SS: I can remember that we had to protest Bob Hope being given an honorary at our commencement. And all or many of us wore white armbands, and when he was given his degree we stood up and turned our backs on him. Felt very righteous about it, and felt that that was very characteristic of the insensitivity [01:00] of the Brown administration to what was going on in the real world or (inaudible) corporation, what was going on in the real world. (inaudible) Oh, no men in the dorm rooms.

JS: So if you did entertain men, you'd have to come down to --

SS: You could entertain them in the lobby, in the lounges. You could have men in your room on Sunday afternoon from 2:00 to 4:00, or 1:00 to 4:00, or something, with the door open and three feet on the floor. [laughter] [02:00] Gosh. That's pretty much all I had written down on here...I remember the Pembroke library. Great place to study. Is it still there?

JS: Mm-hmm. OK, well thank you so much --

SS: Oh, you're welcome.

JS: -- for volunteering to do this.

SS: Well, I hope it was helpful.

JS: I'm sure it was.

SS: What are you going to do with this?

JS: I'm using it as part of a journalism project and it's also going to go into the archives for the oral history. And I think part of this being compiled for the centennial of women at Brown, which is coming up, and they're writing a book on this stuff too, so I think they're going to be taking pieces from different oral histories and from the men.

SS: [03:00] What's your journalism project?

JS: It's supposed to be an immersion project, which is an in-depth article on something, and so I chose to do it on the history of women at Brown, spanning from the '20s to basically now.

SS: Do you get to write about your own experiences for that?

JS: Yeah, he wants us to sort of take a personal angle and relate it to something, so that's what I'm doing.

SS: That's great.

JS: OK, well, I'm going to stop this tape now.

- END -