

## UNCG CENTENNIAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Harriet Kupferer

INTERVIEWER: William Link

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[Begin Side A]

WL: I'd like to begin today by asking you to tell me a little bit more about your background, where you were born and what brought you to this institution. You were a student here—why it was that you came, why and how it was that you came to Woman's College of [The University of] North Carolina?

HK: Well, I was born in Clifton, New Jersey, and went through high school in New Jersey. That was just at the tail end of the depression, and tuition here was far more reasonable than it was in any other women's institution. NJC, for example, which was New Jersey College for Women at the time, was something like twelve hundred dollars then, whereas this was four hundred [dollars]. And so that was a major factor in making the decision. Plus a number of girls from the northeast came down here for primarily the same reason.

WL: So there's a tradition of women from the east coming—from the northeast coming here?

HK: Yes, from southern New England, New Jersey. So that's how it was I came here.

WL: And you came in nineteen—

HK: [Nineteen] thirty-nine, fall of '39.

WL: Fall of '39? What were your initial impressions when you arrived?

HK: I was terrified, absolutely awestruck. The southern culture was considerably different from that to which I had become accustomed in my first seventeen years. Terribly homesick, but I was by no means the only homesick one in the Class of '43. But by Thanksgiving it had pretty much worn off.

WL: Coming from New Jersey in the 1930s into North Carolina must have been a very—there must have been a very sharp—

HK: Very, very—very, very sharp.

WL: Any examples, just to—

HK: Well, the race question, for one, was so obvious, sitting in the rear of the bus, and you know, girls seventeen years old being called “Miss Harriet” by dormitory maids and so on. And there was such a, kind of *noblesse oblige* attitude toward them.

WL: Toward the students?

HK: No, toward, toward the maids, toward the blacks, yeah—very maternal, paternalistic attitude toward them. That was one of the major things. I guess that was probably the sharpest impression.

WL: Did you notice, let’s see, you must have noticed segregation when you came in public facilities?

HK: Oh yes, yes.

WL: Bus terminals, and—

HK: Bus terminals and drinking fountains were separated, and the johns were separated, and the waiting rooms at the train were separated, and black cars on the train going home and such things as that.

WL: Was the—what was the—how would you characterize student life? You were here from 1939 to ’43. What were some of the characteristics of student life, generally and specifically?

HK: Well, from this perspective now, I would say it was exceedingly sheltered. But compared to Greensboro College, which was then a women’s college, too, well, we were almost libertines over here. One could smoke anywhere one wanted to, except at The Corner, [corner of Tate Street and Walker Avenue] interestingly enough. You couldn’t smoke in any of The Corner little eateries. I’ve never known quite why. But you could smoke in your room, you could smoke in any—any building, but the one thing you were not to do was to walk across the campus with a cigarette in your hand. But as I say, we had far more freedom than most of the other women’s colleges in the area, like Salem [College] and all the rest of them. They were quite confined.

Freshman year we had what was then called “closed study.” You were in your room from 7:30 to 10:30 [pm]. The only way you could get out was to get a pass to go to the library. At 10:30 you could come out and eleven o’clock there were lights out for freshmen. And that continued the whole freshman year unless you had a B average. But it was awkward because if your roommate didn’t, it was a bit of a problem with one being able to go around and about and the other one not, so that was kind of an awkward situation.

Of course there were no cuts that first year. You got one cut in each course, then from then on you got three cuts a semester in each course. And some of the faculty would be highly irate if you took them. I mean, attendance was really mandatory. And I would say on balance, looking at it, it was quite a maternal attitude. We used to think we

couldn't even take a deep breath without somebody knowing about it. A lot of guidance whether we wanted it or not or needed it or not.

WL: Maternal in the sense of the institution, or—?

HK: Yeah, the institution and the faculty. There's a term for it that escapes—that escapes me now. It's what, a Latin term? *In loco parentis*. Very, very much that way. Any time you left the campus, you had to sign out. When you came back, you signed in. Had to get permission slips from home, that is your parents had to sign a permission slip for you to ride in an automobile or horseback riding or whatever that was outside of the ordinary kind of thing.

WL: What would happen—what—on what occasions would students to into town? Were there—?

HK: Oh, to the movies. And if you still had enough of your allowance left, you'd go in for dinner some nights, something like that. But always hats and hose to town, and gloves.

WL: Was that required?

HK: Oh yes, absolutely. You got caught downtown without hat or hose on, you were in real trouble.

WL: And gloves, as well.

HK: I don't think they were as strict on the gloves, but certainly—was hat.

WL: Hat and hose?

HK: Hat and hose. But I must say, an amazing array of hats went to town—beanies, little freshman beanies, which freshmen in other schools used to wear at that time.

WL: Did, did students here wear beanies, or were they required to?

HK: No, no, we had them from other places.

WL: I see, in order to fulfill the requirements of having a hat.

HK: A hat, we figured a hat was a hat.

WL: Yes. What were the relations between town and gown? What you suggested is a kind of cloistered, very cloistered atmosphere, students here—?

HK: I suppose so. Certainly from your perspective it was, as I say not nearly as cloistered as Greensboro College or Salem College or Peace [College] or some of those others. I don't

know about town and gown with regard to faculty and the townspeople, but the merchants were very outgoing, very generous actually.

Used to be a place down at the corner, can't remember the name of the fellow who ran it. I kind of mix it up with Harry's at Chapel Hill. But in any case, you didn't have any money, you'd sign your name, twenty-five cents you owed them. Or if you didn't have any money [and] you wanted to borrow it, you signed your name in his notebook, you borrowed—I think his name was Bert, come to think of it—you borrowed fifty cents from Bert. And then you'd settle everything up at the end of the month. They were very congenial, very helpful.

I remember one time my roommate and I didn't have any money, and we went down to Carolina Theatre. And we thought, well, maybe we can give our rings to the cashier, our class rings as deposit. So we went hiking in, talked to the manager with this long spiel about how it was the end of the month—and we each received ten dollars a month at that time for allowance—and could we please leave our class rings as deposit and we would come back and bail them out.

So he said, "Here are two tickets, go on in and keep your rings." So that sort of thing was quite common.

WL: Was the—how would the attitude toward students at Woman's College compare with the attitude toward other institutions? You suggested that Greensboro was much more protected and more—

HK: Oh, much more so.

WL: And more regulated than Salem also, a more traditional sort of girl's school. Did—I may be asking too much here, but did the community regard Woman's College as something a little different? How so?

HK: I would think so, Bill, but I can't be sure. In the first place, there were so many more of us; there were about, almost four thousand women. And there were bigger concerts here, and they had a lecture series then—the Philharmonic and Martha Graham and all those kinds of things, which I think the other schools at that point couldn't afford. So I think the Woman's College was more of a focus for townspeople, because Greensboro was small then, too. I—fifty thousand, maybe, something like that, I'm not sure.

WL: And Woman's College was a big enough place that it had a great deal more diversity.

HK: Much more so.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about The Corner, what it was like in those days. You mentioned there was a variety of shops. Can you give me more?

HK: They were—

WL: —a panoramic view?

HK: There was a little bakery, and there was Bert's, which is now the Chinese place.

WL: The Hong Kong House.

HK: Yeah, yeah. The theatre was built, I think, my freshman year. Wasn't there when I came, I think it was built then. So it was Bert's, the bakery, the hardware, which—is that still there, Bill?

HK: It's not there, no.

HK: Hart, Hart and Hammer, or Hammer and Hart, something Hardware.

WL: Moved away three or four years ago.

HK: And then The Corner, which is—that was still there under different management, and it had booths, I think, as I recall. Then across the street was a little grocery store and a Greek restaurant. And that's about all there was across the street. There's some old houses in there that have since been torn down. That Greek restaurant, I won't mention the fellow's name for two reasons. One, I can't remember it, but we knew him. He used to put bourbon in Coke and send it up to the dorms, if you knew him very well.

WL: And he would do that for a price?

HK: Well, back in those days you could call any one of these places and order a Coke and a grilled cheese or whatever, and it would be delivered to your dorm. They had black delivery boys on bikes, and they would ride up and stand outside the door and bellow, "201 Coit," so someone'd [sic] go down and get it. Well, once you got real sophisticated and a senior and lived down in A and B or at Woman's, which has now been torn down, and you knew this fellow at The Corner very well, you could order a Coke.

And I've forgotten what the expression was, but I really never did it, but I knew of kids who did. And he'd put a shot of bourbon in the Coke. You know, it came in a cardboard container. Of course, drinking was a shipping offense—you got caught, you were—well, at the very least you'd be suspended for six weeks, which was tantamount to death because you could never make up that work, anyhow.

WL: Was, was there much violation of the rules? Much of this sort of—

HK: Not a lot, but there was, and a lot of kids didn't get caught.

WL: Who would catch them? Was it, was there a self-regulating system, students—

HK: No, not so much then. The house president would catch them or the counselor—the dormitory counselor would apprehend them, I guess.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about the curriculum. As an entering freshman, what battery of courses did you face?

HK: There was very little choice. You took a foreign language, and you took a science, and you took English and history and hygiene, either the first or second semester, and an elective in there somewhere. And then the same thing the second year, the second year of the language, second year English, second year history, and second year science, usually biology and chemistry. Math was not a requirement, but two sciences were. And then, depending on what your major was, then it would differ from your junior year on.

WL: The last two years were a specialized major?

HK: Yeah, but the first two years were quite circumscribed. I think I had—we had about two or three electives in those first two years.

WL: Did you have a choice in terms of who your instructors were?

HK: Yeah. You'd go down to the gym and the departments would have tables. And then the instructors would be sitting at the table and you'd get in the line for the instructor you wanted.

WL: That's how registration took place?

HK: Yes.

WL: What kinds of students came here? Now you've—you were not—I guess you were typical of a certain sort of students that came, coming from the Northeast, a good significant portion of students that came in the thirties and forties. How would you characterize the other parts of the student body?

HK: Well, they ranged really from very poor kids, farm people, girls from the mountains and down in the eastern part of the state right up to debutantes from Charlotte. It was quite a diversified student body. I think the reason for that was women couldn't go to [The University of North Carolina at] Chapel Hill then. So this was the state institution for women here.

So unless the girls went to Duke [University] or some of the other smaller women's colleges, this would be where they would come. And I think that accounts for this enormous social-economic range that we had—levels of sophistication and everything else.

WL: The diversity that we talked about earlier. Large size, fairly large size, really, the student body, significantly large.

HK: Yes.

WL: And range of geographical types and class.

HK: Oh yes.

WL: What sort of relations existed between—how would you characterize the relations and relationships between faculty and students when you were here?

HK: Well, they certainly knew more about us, I would say, than we did when I was faculty here, at least in the later years, in any case. They had held conferences, periodic conferences with everyone in her class or his class, and they knew what dorm you lived in. And periodically they were invited to dinner. We had formal dinners, and you'd invite a faculty member. And they had to suffer through eating in the dining room in formal clothes.

So it was really a much closer kind of relationship. But this varied too, by personality of the faculty. Some were nosier than others.

WL: When they came to dinner, it was, this was in the dining hall?

HK: Yeah, all those dinners were sit-down dinners.

WL: And they were formal—meant formal attire or?

HK: When there was a concert in Aycock [Auditorium], the dinners were formal dinners so you wore long dresses and whatnot. And that's usually when you invited a faculty member. And she would have to come, or if it were a man, he and his wife would be in formal—

WL: And they would sit at a regular table or?

HK: Yeah, a regular table. And tables were waited on by kids who were working their way through school.

WL: Okay. You mentioned there were frequent faculty conferences.

HK: Yes.

WL: Did you?

HK: Practically every time the grades came out you met with your faculty advisor, as well as the person who taught the course if you were not doing very well.

WL: Okay. You would have two conferences?

HK: Yes.

WL: How did, how did the faculty regard students? Did they, in other words, did—particularly in the case of students from—poor students from mountain regions or from rural regions. I guess I'm asking a leading questions. I'm wondering, I heard from other people that it was a sense of mission on the part of—

HK: Well, oh yes, I was thinking along another line I don't think they made any distinction as far as class and concern was—would be involved—but I think they really thought they had a challenge or a mission to, you know, introduce these youngsters who came from fairly isolated areas to what was then the great outside world.

WL: There were, there was a fairly solid group of dedicated women who were faculty here.

HK: Yes.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about them.

HK: Well, it's hard, it's hard for me to tell you about them. Dedicated they were. In some ways, you'd almost say self sacrificing. They didn't mind that they were paid less than the faculty at Chapel Hill, for example. They lived around the campus. Most of them had apartments down on McIver Street or Mendenhall [Street]. That was before Mendenhall—I think it's Mendenhall—became such a kind of a rundown area. But they all lived quite close to the campus, and they walked to class and you'd see them around all the time. I don't think any of them lived very far out.

But I think the teaching load was fifteen hours, if I'm not mistaken, which of course today we would throw our hands up and scream bloody murder at such an imposition. I don't think in all those four years I ever had a true-false test, maybe once or twice. They were all essay exams. And they sat, and they graded them and they read them. Put a lot of time in on them—things that we don't see much anymore.

WL: They were around a lot—faculty were around a lot in their offices?

HK: Yes.

WL: Were they around in the evening as well?

HK: Well, only if there was something going on. I think they were in their apartments and little houses that ring the campus.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about the physical layout of the campus. What about—let's begin with residential areas. The dormitories that you lived in over the years—four years you were here.

HK: Well, two of the dormitories have been torn down, Woman's and Kirkland.

WL: Woman's is located where?

HK: Woman's is located where part of the library is now. See, there was that road that runs down in front of the dorms. Gray Dorm was the first, and then Cotten, and then Coit. Right across from them was a bridge that went into the big dining room area, which was like a big cartwheel. And Woman's was to the right of the bridge, and Kirkland was to



the left. And they were two-story dorms with big porches, and we all slept out on the porches all year round, if you got down fast enough to get your bed out on the porch.

WL: Great competition to get that?

HK: Oh yeah, you'd try to get here early, a day or two before you had to—as soon as the dorms opened so you could get your bed out on the porch.

WL: Porches were screened?

HK: No, no, they were open. They had a wall up about this high all the way around. And I think, let's see, [unclear] two—a small porch on either end and I think you could get four on that. And the big ones held about twenty. But those beds were just absolutely packed together. If somebody turned over at one end, it reverberated all the way down. Each bed shook when somebody turned over. In the winter it took longer to dress to go to bed than it did to dress to go out, what with flannel pajamas and boots and everything else.

WL: But you would still stay there in the winter?

HK: Oh, yeah. Often some of us would sleep there the whole winter. Some of the weaker ones would move in along about January.

WL: What was the attraction of that?

HK: Oh, I don't know. Whatever attracts a twenty year old to do something like that?

WL: That's interesting. So they'd maintain their rooms. They would keep their clothes in the rooms.

HK: Oh, yeah. We used the rooms more as studies, then.

WL: I see. So they'd be completely converted for study purposes, which makes a good bit of sense. Okay, let's move on to other physical characteristics of the campus.

HK: Well, there was the old McIver, which was torn down and replaced by this one. I don't know how old it was, but it was quite old—wooden floors. But a much larger building, actually. Then a lot of instruction took place in the Administration Building, the old Administration Building. All upstairs there were all classrooms.

WL: The Foust Building?

HK: Foust Building, they were all classrooms.

WL: What was McIver, was McIver a pleasant building to be in?

HK: Yes, much more pleasant than this one. I mean, it had character. I imagine it was built in the Victorian—somewhere in that period. I'm just not sure when. Red brick, wide corridors.

WL: Large classrooms?

HK: They varied in size, classrooms varied in size. The science labs were in upstairs McIver, top floor of McIver. The new science building was just being built with PWA funds, public works funds at the time, because I had biology in McIver and chemistry in the new science building and anatomy and the rest of them in the new science building.

Then the other building was the home economics building and the old gym—Rosenthal Gym. And the library and I think—and Curry. And those were the only instruction buildings there were.

WL: So most of your classes—

HK: Oh no, excuse me the music building, old music [Brown Building].

WL: Old music, which was?

HK: Well, it's still there on the corner next to Aycock [Auditorium].

WL: And Aycock existed as well. Most of the classes might well be in McIver?

HK: Almost all arts and sciences were in McIver until they built the science building, and then, of course, the sciences moved there.

WL: Especially your first two years it was likely, the students would be, freshmen and sophomores—

HK: Romance language department was in Foust on the second story or third story of Foust, I guess.

WL: What was the library like?

HK: I think for the way we were taught and the expectations it was quite an adequate undergraduate library.

WL: Inadequate?

HK: No, I would say adequate.

WL: The same building, the front of it, or is that new?

HK: That's Forney [Building].

WL: Ah, Forney is the old library.

HK: Forney is the old library. I don't know what's in Forney now. It was business before they built the business school.

WL: It has various things in it now. And the dining hall was in the same?

HK: In the same location, and there were four dining rooms. You know, they went out from a central kitchen—they radiated out. And breakfast and lunch were cafeteria but dinners were always sit-down, served dinners.

WL: Served dinners. And served by?

HK: Students.

WL: Students. Tell me a little bit more about the social life of students. What were some of the things that students did for fun?

HK: Well, they dated a lot. Carolina [UNC Chapel Hill] boys came over, and [North Carolina] State [University] boys came over and then Elon College boys. So there were dates. A lot of dances, tea dances. Probably there was a formal dance every weekend under the auspices of something, either the literary societies, of which I don't think there are any left here, or a class dance or a dormitory dance, so that there was always, almost always a dance every weekend.

WL: What was a tea dance?

HK: Afternoon, four o'clock or something like that.

WL: Dictated by the time, tea time.

HK: Yeah. Then, of course, a lot of these dances were not what they called card dances. Do you know what a card dance is? A program dance?

WL: That's where you take your card and—

HK: Well, see, if I were going to the junior-senior prom, I would get the program, and I would have invited my date from wherever. And he got the first dance, the dance right before intermission, the one after intermission and the last dance. And then you ran around to all your friends and swapped dances and said, "We'll meet under the clock," or something like this. Now that was a very formal-type dance. And I must say, faculty were dragged into chaperone those, too.

An informal dance was—let's say Coit Dorm is having a dance, and you invite a boy or you may not. But those were what we called girl-break dances. In other words, the girls would cut in, the boys didn't.

WL: Boys didn't at all?

HK: No, the girls would cut in. It was referred to as a girl-break dance. And then every night after dinner, between 7:00 and 7:30 [pm], a number of girls would gather at Spencer game room, which no longer exists either, but that was the basement of Spencer Dormitory. South Spencer had a jukebox in it, and they'd play the jukebox and dance with each other. And then at 7:30 [pm] the freshmen had to go back to their rooms, and others went about their business.

Monday night was closed night on campus—no dates. No men on campus at all on Monday nights, so that meetings were all held on Monday nights—club meetings or whatever.

WL: Did, when the boys came to campus, did they have to follow a certain procedure? Did they have to sign in?

HK: No, they didn't sign in. They went to the desk in the dorm. There was always a hostess, and you would say, "I'm here for so-and-so," and she would call through the intercom system.

WL: I see. And that person would sign out?

HK: Yeah, she'd have to sign out.

WL: She'd have to sign out. And these privileges were more available to upperclassmen?

HK: Oh yeah. But on weeknights they had to be in eleven [o'clock], and twelve [o'clock] on Saturday and Sunday nights.

WL: Where were the dances held?

HK: In the gym. In one or—let's see, there were the big gym or the little gym. They would be held in the gym, or they'd be held in the dorms—in the big parlors in the dorms. The old dorms had very big parlors. They'd push furniture back and roll the rugs up, and they'd be held in there, too.

WL: What was the—what sort of music?

HK: Well, in the dorms, most of those would be jukebox or small, small orchestras. In the gym, they would be big ones. This was in the big band era. Now I don't recall if we ever had Tommy Dorsey or Glenn Miller, but it would be bands like that.

WL: Who would be on tour and head to campus? So every weekend you'd have something like that going on?

HK: Yes.

WL: Faculty were—had some sort of chaperoning role in the—at the dances and at functions where men, boys, were present? Were there other campus—what other sort of campus wide events were there?

HK: Well, the concerts and the plays, and that sort of thing. And then the mass meeting, which was a meeting of the total student body in Aycock. I don't know how many of those we had a year—two or three a year.

WL: I see. That was the entire student body together?

HK: Yes. Freshmen sat upstairs, and the seniors were in the front rows of the orchestra and then the juniors and then the sophomores. The last mass meeting of the year the seniors got up and walked out with their sister class singing the class song. Then all the classes moved up, and the freshmen came down out of the balcony and sat in their sophomore seats.

WL: Oh, I see, part of the ceremony of—

HK: A rite of passage.

WL: Rite of passage. So the culmination of this was a process by which you reached the front of the auditorium and became seniors?

HK: Yes.

WL: Were there assemblies, were there daily assemblies?

HK: No, not daily. We had chapel every Tuesday. But it wasn't really a religious sort of thing. It might be a speaker or a program. I mean, they'd pray or sing a hymn or two, but that was not a major emphasis in chapel. And chapel was required. You sat in your class seats, and there were chapel checkers. That is to say, if I were a chapel checker (which I was one time), I'd have two rows and I knew who was in my row, and I'd have to mark if somebody was out.

WL: Report any absences?

HK: Report any absences.

WL: Was this a mass meeting?

HK: Oh yeah. You had to go. Everybody went.

WL: The entire student body again? So on top of the assemblies you had these additional mass meetings?

HK: Well, no, these were called chapels, the Tuesday chapel.

WL: Right. And then what you described a little bit earlier—

HK: —were student government meetings.

WL: Oh, I see. Whereas assemblies tended to have, would have faculty as well as—

HK: Sometimes faculty came to chapel; sometimes they didn't. They didn't have to.

WL: What about physical exercise, physical activities? Was there much in the way of organized sports?

HK: Oh, yes, it was required. Physical education was required the first two years, I guess. Then it was optional. But oh yeah, we had hockey team, tennis team, swimming team—had all the—in fact, soccer, basketball, the whole business.

WL: Was it done on an intramural basis?

HK: Intramural basis and also what was then called play days or sports days, where we might play Guilford College. But it wasn't the intense varsity sort of thing. But we did play other schools.

WL: On a club basis?

HK: Yeah, club basis.

WL: Rather than organized, semiprofessional.

HK: Yes.

WL: The golf course—did many students take advantage of that?

HK: It was not built till my senior year. It was a lake down there—woods and a lake where we—the college had a few canoes, and you could take, took canoeing courses down there.

WL: Was that well used?

HK: Yes. And there was an amphitheatre, I forgot to mention that, where the May Day program was held. They always had May Day. You voted for May Day Queen and all her attendants. I can't really recall what precisely went on. But the physical education majors did—well, they had folk dances and old English dances. And there was a—I think the May Day Queen had a male escort, I'm not really sure about that. But it was a program that lasted about an hour, an hour and a half.

WL: On May 1st?

HK: Yes.

WL: Did—Allen Trelease [emeritus professor of history] , in doing this pictorial history of the university described the amphitheatre as actually being in reverse. How did it face the lake?

HK: I can't remember. I really don't remember, Bill. I don't think it faced the lake, but I'm not positive about that. I think the lake was over here and here were the seats and here was the stage, you know, the pit. But I'm not positive. I'm pretty sure that it didn't face the lake.

WL: Was this amphitheatre used for anything besides the May Day?

HK: I can't recall ever having gone to anything else there.

WL: It's main purpose was this very important May Day? Was the May Day event a campus-wide event?

HK: Oh yeah. You voted for the May Day Queen and all her court. And it was a lot of planning that went into it, but I can't recall a great deal about it. It was not one of my favorite activities.

WL: Was there a May pole?

HK: I think so; I think there was.

WL: This seems to have been a fairly common phenomenon at women's colleges—May Day ceremonies. Was this campus affected at all by the war?

HK: Oh boy, it sure was. We used to see—that was about my sophomore year, I guess—we'd be out in the playing fields, and the truck after truck after truck carrying GIs on their way to Fort Bragg, I presume. Endless convoys. And then somewhere in around there Greensboro became what, ORD?

WL: It had an ORD.

HK: It had an ORD and it also had something else. One became the other. But anyhow, there were a lot of—oh, it was overseas something depot.

WL: Overseas Replacement Depot.

HK: Something like that. So there were a lot boys stationed here in Greensboro as well as Fort Bragg. And we were dragooned into going to dances with them.

You know, the Jefferson Standard building downtown was then "the" skyscraper. It had a restaurant on top of it, a very excellent restaurant. Well, every Saturday night there would be a dance. I think the city fathers put it on for the GIs. And we'd have to

sign up to go. I mean, you had to do at least one a month or something like that. So there you'd be down there with these guys with these heavy boots on tramping all over your feet because they didn't have dress shoes, I guess, at that time. I don't know why.

Another funny thing happened. I think it's when the camp here in Greensboro opened. All the shrubbery was sharply pruned back around the dormitories, the reason being so that boys couldn't lurk behind the bushes or young couples couldn't get behind the bushes and behave in an unseemly fashion. Anyway, but we were so amused, because they had big shrubs around the dorms, and they all wound up being about three feet high. And that was—I don't know who ordered that, but that was one of the offshoots. But yes, there were boys here all the time in uniform.

WL: And there must have been a good deal of anxiety about having all these males, as you suggested about the shrubs. Someone else told me that they had a patrol system—that the faculty patrolled in the evening.

HK: Maybe so. If they did, I didn't know about that.

The presence of soldiers got me into a rather a peculiar circumstance. I don't know if I told you we had to have riding permits from home to go in other people's cars or horseback riding or whatever. Well, my roommate and I dated these two boys from New England for I guess almost six months, as long as they were in Fort Bragg. They came up one time, and they said, "Let's go out to the airport," which at that time was just a little old wooden building, "and rent an airplane" because they were pilots.

So we did. We went flying all over Greensboro—came back and signed in and word got around that Helen and Harriet had been flying. Well, we had to go to what was then called the "judi" board, the judicial board, which was the sanctioning agency on campus. And we were charged with illegal riding or flying or something. But we pointed out that there's nowhere in the regulations that required you to have permission to go flying. We had our car permission and our horse permission and whatever. So we were exonerated.

But Miss [Louise] Alexander, who you may have heard of, was in [sic] political science department, a rather energetic suffragette sort of woman, said we didn't violate the letter of the law but we violated the spirit of the law. So after that they added flying to the permission.

WL: Was this body that reviewed the evidence, was it composed of mostly faculty, students?

HK: Oh, all students.

WL: All students?

HK: Yes, president of the student government, the vice president of student government and judicial board members that were elected from each dorm, and Miss Alexander, who was the advisor.

WL: Was there an honor system enforced?



HK: Not as such then. The honor system came in about my senior year. There was kind of an implicit sort of thing, but the real honor system was inaugurated my senior year.

WL: What did you feel about the administration, if anything, when you were here? It wasn't much of an administration really, was there?

HK: No. There was Dr. [Walter Clinton] Jackson and Miss [Harriet] Elliott and the dean of women. No, Miss Elliott was the dean of women. It was just Dean Jackson and Dean Elliott and then the registrar and those kings of ancillary thing, but as far as much in the way of administrative baggage, that was it.

WL: That was it, those two people?

HK: Yes.

WL: Was Jackson in person around a lot? Did you see him?

HK: Oh, yes, he was quite avuncular, you know. He'd walk around the campus and talk to students. Certainly not an awesome person in any sense of the word.

WL: And he was a personal presence with students that they had access to?

HK: Yes, and Miss Elliott was much the same way. Of course, she was off campus quite a bit during the war, because she was tapped by President [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt for something. I don't just now recall what it was. She was in and out a good bit of that time.

WL: Yes, during the war years.

HK: Yeah.

WL: Okay, you graduated in 1943 and you came back here?

HK: In 1961, the fall of '61.

WL: Eighteen years later.

HK: Yes.

WL: What brought you back here? I mean, how did you—?

HK: Well, when I—I, of course, didn't tell you what I majored in when I was here. I was a physical education major. And I went back to New Jersey and taught a year there, and then started graduate work at NYU [New York University]. And next year I got a position at the University of Connecticut where I stayed for twelve years. In the meantime, I had gotten an EdD from NYU, and somewhere along eighth, ninth, or tenth

year at Connecticut, I became quite dissatisfied with physical education—or not it, but my role in it.

So I took a leave of absence and went to Chapel Hill to take a year in anthropology. And having had that year, I decided there was no way that I could ever go back. So I resigned up there and got a fellowship, an IMH [Institute for Medical Humanities] fellowship at Chapel Hill, did a PhD in anthropology there.

When I got my degree I was looking around for a job, and there was a one-year position here replacing [Richard] Dick Lieban, I think it was. So Dean [Mereb] Mossman, as she was known then—I had known her quite well and kept up, we had kept up more or less—asked me if I would take the position for a year. And I said I would, and it stretched out to thirty.

WL: So you came in 1961?

HK: Well, it didn't stretch out to thirty, but actually it was twenty-six years, but I had bought time back in the retirement system.

WL: I see.

[recording paused]

WL: What sort of changes were there?

HK: Not very much. A few new dormitories, but the general atmosphere was much the same. Still required attendance. I think the dormitory regulations were pretty much the same. I think that the dress code had changed somewhat as far as going downtown, that sort of thing. But in general, I didn't see a great deal of change.

WL: Similar in terms of student life, student rituals? What about faculty? You were a faculty person in 1961, so you're seeing the university community very differently.

HK: Yes. Well, I thought, well, in the first place there were still a number of people here who had, were here when I was a student then.

WL: Still on the faculty?

HK: Yes. And everyone ate in the home ec[onomics] cafeteria, which is no longer in existence. And evidently the faculty was just recovering from an evidently bitter fight over an administrator who had left, Ed [ward Kidder] Graham Jr. [former chancellor], whom I never knew. I had met him once when I had come back for a reunion, but I never knew him. The faculty was tremendously divided over that, and I don't know what the issues were. But in the home ec cafeteria, one faction sat on one side and other faction sat on the other side.

WL: This was in 1961. It was still—

HK: Yes, there was still some, evidently some hard feelings about that situation.

WL: How did—was the factional breakup, the factional divisions, did it follow any sort of pattern or—

HK: See, I really don't know. I think it was—the age was a factor. The number of years people had been on the faculty perhaps had something to do with it, against, not necessarily age, but people who had been here fewer years may have been on another side in the situation. So that was rather obvious.

Also the faculty was, from my point of view I thought, quite cliquish. In fact, I was rather lonely here the first year or two. I thought if I could ever get back to Storrs, Connecticut, I would leave in a moment. But then as some of the older ones retired and newer ones came in, that exclusiveness, I think, gradually eroded.

I used to call the home ec cafeteria the “Inn of the Blue-Headed Ladies” when most, when the older faculty, they all sat together and they used purple tint on their hair. That was before I got gray, and I wouldn't be quite so facetious now as I was then. But that gradually changed as new people came in and more men came on the faculty. See, there weren't many male faculty members then either. I don't know what the ratio was, but it wasn't high.

WL: Was the cliquishness by age—was it by—was there a kind of a hierarchy of rank, or was it cliquish in the sense that new people were not accepted?

HK: I think it probably was that more than anything.

WL: New people?

HK: Yeah, I suspect it was that.

WL: That generation of women—

HK: See, most of them were there when I was there. They were then, say, in their late fifties and early sixties when I came back. And they had been there, golly, since—some of them, 1928, '29. This was their whole life. They ate, slept, and drank the Woman's College.

WL: A very distinct generation. They were all about the same age, more or less?

HK: Roughly, I would say so, yeah.

WL: In the same decade. So they all must have gone, must have retired fairly similarly.

HK: I think so. There was a rash of retirements between 1960 and '70 that involved most of these people.

WL: Who were some of the other people, newer people, coming in? What are they like?

HK: More professional. Well, that's probably an unhappy choice of words. More scholarly. Now most of these women did not have PhDs. There were very few PhDs among them, mostly master's degrees. The men who were here like, [Professor of history Richard] Dick Bardolph, who was here then—although he was not here when I was a student—men tended to have PhDs.

A few of the women did. A couple in physics did. They didn't in chemistry, though. Miss [Florence] Schaeffer never had one. They were teaching-oriented people. As the newer—some of us came in, I think we posed a threat, too, because our graduate school experience was one of, you know, research, publishing, and teaching.

And this institution was beginning to change then too, because when I interviewed for the job, Dr. [Lyda Gordon] Shivers, who was then head of the sociology department, made it rather clear that some professional writing was expected. And I think that posed a threat to some of these folks too. And then we agitated for twelve-hour loads and then eventually nine-hour loads so that we corresponded with the Chapel Hill and State programs.

WL: And that was a change that might have been perceived as a threat?

HK: Yeah, yeah.

WL: I'm wondering about some of the men that are coming in in this period and what position they occupy. And I don't know how well you can answer this question, but whether their position is difficult—or whether, another question is whether—was there a concerted effort on the part of the university to make the faculty more male in this period?

HK: I suspect there was, because it, you know, it had become coeducational—at least in name if not in fact—there during that period. And I think there was an effort to bring more men in. And I think, too, that more men were willing to come when it became coeducational. I'm not at all sure that teaching in a women's college was every man's cup of tea, particularly depending on his major and his professional aspirations and so on.

WL: Yeah. Let's talk a little bit about coeducation since that officially occurred two years after you arrived—1963. First of all, let me ask where the decision or where did your perception, what your perception was at the decision to go coeducational, where did it come from? Did it come from, in this university, with another higher administration in Chapel Hill?

HK: Well, my—I think it came subtly from the state government. Now I could be wrong, and certainly Mereb Mossman could give you all these answers because she was right in the middle of it at the time. But I was at the faculty meeting—and they used to have faculty meetings quite different from those that we've had in later years—when Otis Singletary, who was then the chancellor, got up and made that announcement.

And it came as quite a shock, I think, to many people. I think I had had wind of it, that this was about to come about. I can't remember why. And if memory serves me right, he either said or implied that maintaining a women's college was too expensive. It was a luxury that the state of North Carolina could no longer afford. And that's the reason that was given at that time. See, because this was prior to the great rush to coeducation at Yale and Harvard and, well, Vassar, that came when, in the seventies, Bill?

WL: Yes, '69 to '71.

HK: Yeah. It came in that period. This was much prior to that, so it wasn't drawn into it because of those reasons. It was put to us as an economic reason. Now whether that was fact or not, I don't know.

WL: But it came as the decision that had already been made.

HK: Oh, yes. It was *fait accompli*, there was no, "Would you like to vote on this business," at all.

WL: And the suggestion or the implication was that it had come from the state.

HK: That it had come from above.

WL: You say the faculty was quite shocked.

HK: And many displeased—the older people quite displeased. I wasn't too enthusiastic about it myself, primarily because I do think there is still a role for men's colleges and women's colleges.

WL: How so?

HK: Well, when I compared the way coeducation, at least took place in Connecticut, and women's college education—not just this one but Smith and some of the others where I had good friends on the faculty—the girls were always reluctant to take a stand on anything, reluctant to appear too bright. Whether this was true or their perception of it was—their perception that they figured boys wouldn't want girls that were brighter than they, so you always got this downplay. And president of student government, never a girl; editor of the newspaper, never a girl. They were secretaries and all that sort of thing. And I think that, I always thought that was too bad and I think that—and as a consequence of that I do think there is a place for segregated education by sex.

WL: Did you see this sort of phenomenon in your own classes?

HK: No, because the girls so greatly outnumbered the boys, they were afraid to open their mouths those first two or three years. They kind of sat and shivered in the back row.

WL: The boys were?

HK: Yes.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about those early years when the boys were such a, very few boys here.

HK: Oh, very few. I wouldn't want to make a guess about how many were enrolled that first year, but I would certainly say there were a hundred. I'm afraid they were objects of a good bit of ridicule, too.

WL: You're saying the boys were the object of ridicule?

HK: Not by the faculty, or I don't even think by the girls. But by other, other men in the area said, "Why would anybody want to go over there?" And they made, I would say, some unfair assumptions about their masculinity and that sort of thing. Those first boys had a somewhat difficult time.

Then, of course, there was the major problem: well, what do you do about the restrooms, because it was all, you know, women faculty and students. Well, the students were obviously girls, and we had women faculty [restrooms] because we had men faculty. So we had to distinguish at the faculty level but not at the student level. They had to run around trying to figure out what to do about the johns.

And the gymnasium caused an amazing amount of trouble. Where are we going to put their locker rooms and all that kind of business. And then at that time, they hired the first male physical education teacher, Jim [James] Swiggett who just retired this year or last year, I can't remember which. He coached and taught. So the arrival of boys did create some problems. And I don't know what dorms they put them in when they first came, either, Bill. I don't remember where they put them.

WL: So they were sort of a curiosity that fit into the—well, how'd they fit into the rituals and pattern of, and the restrictions that long governed life? Did that, that must have changed?

HK: No, those changed, too. As I say, I don't know where the heck they housed them. But I'm pretty sure that they didn't have the closing hour restrictions.

WL: The boys didn't?

HK: Boys didn't. Well, I really don't know where they stayed that first year because there weren't enough to fill up a dormitory. Unless they put them in Kirkland or some place like that that only held about a hundred some-odd students.

WL: Small dormitory.

HK: Yes.

WL: Yeah. How would you assess coeducation here? You retired in 1985 so you saw a good, long, several three, almost three decades of, well, at least two decades of the experience. What do you think were the advantages of this, if any?

HK: Well, I don't think the phenomenon of girls taking back seats is as entrenched here because of its earlier tradition and because there are not yet a majority of males in the student body. And so from that point of view, I don't think it has been detrimental. I think, too, in some respects it's been good. It's made for a better faculty, a much better faculty.

And at least the men I taught, most of them, particularly at the upper levels, were good students, real serious students. Some of the ones in the freshman, sophomore classes were—left a little bit to be desired. But on balance, I think our, our upper-class students, at least the ones I had, were good.

WL: Let's talk a little about the—we talked about faculty and, a little bit about the faculty when you first arrived. The administration is going through some change, isn't it, in this period? You have several chancellors, you've mentioned Singletary, Otis Singletary. [Chancellor] Gordon Blackwell was here.

HK: Not when I was here.

WL: He had left?

HK: He had left, and there was an interim man.

WL: [William Whatley] Pierson.

HK: Pierson, who actually signed my contract. When I came on campus, Otis had been hired. Otis was here.

WL: Tell me something about Otis. What sort of person was he?

HK: Oh, very forceful, self-confident. Dominant, not domineering but a dominant personality. He knew what he wanted, and he set about doing it. And one was to jack up the faculty and jack up academic performance, although I think it was pretty good on the whole. But what he was trying to do, I think, was to get away from a bit of a provincialism that was still around when he came. Then of course, he announced it would become coeducational. Then he took off, never to return again. And then Chancellor [James] Ferguson was appointed.

WL: Was Singletary, Otis Singletary, popular with the faculty? Did he, did he—?

HK: I think so. Now again, there were some people who grumped a little bit, some of the older, more traditional types. But certainly among us newcomers and some of the other ones, too, I think we looked quite favorably on him.

For one reason, it was not then the university system that it is now. It was the Greater [Consolidated] University of North Carolina, which was State, Chapel Hill, and Greensboro. And we always got left as far as funding was concerned. You know, well, we'll be nice, we won't scream for this and that and so on. Well, Otis started to change that. I mean, he went over and said, "We've got to get our share of the pie," and so on. And that was an encouraging kind of thing from point of view of salaries and everything else. We were way behind the others.

WL: Yes, and historically underfunded?

HK: I think it was, although I don't think we were really deprived. But I would say it was underfunded. Faculty didn't have telephones, for example, in their offices. It was one phone, and it was in the departmental office. We didn't even have a buzzer system to begin with; then they put in a buzzer system. You'd hop on your skateboard and go flying down to the office to answer the telephone.

We didn't have typewriters. You got a typewriter, you supplied your own. Those kinds of things. You had to beg for a stamp. It was underfunded in those ways.

WL: Little kinds of ways.

HK: Little kinds of ways that were annoying and frustrating.

WL: How about Jim Ferguson? What sort of person was he, and what sort of educational administrator was he? How would you characterize his chancellorship?

HK: Well, the university grew under Jim's administration. He was a man of enormous integrity, patience, quiet and loyal to his faculty. You could always get a hearing with him if you wanted one. He didn't tolerate a lot of nonsense, but he would never in any way make a person look foolish at a meeting or—well, he was a gentleman. A gentleman and a scholar. He was not an aggressive person in any sense of the word. He was very quite and unassuming. But the university grew, and I think the morale was very good under Jim's leadership.

WL: And he had this kind of open-door policy for faculty?

HK: Yes.

WL: Individual faculty would literally go in and see him if they had a problem?

HK: Yes. They would make an appointment with Helen [Yoder] who ran, who ran that building and would go see him. It was also during Jim's administration that the College of Arts and Sciences was created, and [Robert] Bob Miller then became the dean. See, when Miss Mossman was—she was dean of the faculty or dean of the college, I can't remember which—it was the College of Arts and Sciences that had not been constituted. In fact, it was only the School of Education, I think, as a separate unit. Maybe [School of] Music, but I'm not sure about that.



And then the need became obvious to have a College of Arts and Sciences, and physical education, and business, and so on. So Miss Mossman then became assistant vice chancellor or associate vice chancellor. And then the various deans were brought in, which, of course, created another level of administration. But they still, it still didn't erect a great barrier between the faculty and Ferguson.

WL: Mereb Mossman is a person whose leadership spans this whole period—well before it. How, what was her style as an administrator? What was her, how did she operate, function?

HK: Gosh, I wouldn't know how to answer that. She certainly carried out the philosophy of Jim Ferguson and worked exceedingly well with him. I think most of the deans worked very well with her. I wouldn't say all of them because I don't know all of them. But I think most of them did. There were—as any person, she certainly created a little bit of controversy. And I think some of it was jealousy on the part of some women who'd been here nearly as long as Miss Mossman had but hadn't achieved those kinds of advancements. I never heard her say anything unprofessional about anybody.

WL: So she was a very effective administrator? Of course, she—

HK: From my point of view she was, Bill. I, you know, I can't speak for a lot of people.

WL: She worked with a number of different chancellors, remarkable, really, all the way from [Chancellor Edward Kidder] Graham [Jr.] to Ferguson.

HK: Yes.

WL: Yes. And she spans a period of great growth and change, physical change as well as the whole administrative structure in the university.

HK: When she retired from the chance[llorship]—vice chancellorship is what she eventually became, then she came back to the department of sociology and anthropology, which was not then split. And I was acting chairman of that department, or acting head as they called it in those days, at that time. She came back, and she fit in just as smoothly. I mean, no pulling of rank, no expecting anything out of the ordinary, came to all the faculty meetings, did her turn on committees.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about your own department, how it evolved in the years you were there, in 1961—

HK: Well, when I came in 1961, it was the department of sociology, and it had an anthropologist. It also had the social work faculty, of which there were only one or two, I think. The emphasis in the department at that time, however, was a social work philosophy rather than sociology or anthropology.

Dr. [M. Elaine] Burgess and I—well, Dr. Burgess came the year before. We were together at Chapel Hill. She came the year before in the sociology department as a

sociologist. And then Dick Lieban went on leave, and I replaced Dick here. We kind of fought a battle, trying to mute the—that orientation in terms of— tried to get it to become a more academically-, theoretically-oriented department. And Dr. Shivers went along with it, although I don't think she ever quite understood the—our feelings about it.

Well, then Dick came back, and they kept me another year. And it was decided to make the title of the department sociology and anthropology, having now two anthropologists. And it stayed like that a good while. And it grew; we added more and more faculty, both sociology and anthropology 'til we finally got up to somewhere, well, maybe fourteen or fifteen people in the department, the anthropologists always being in the minority, about six of us.

And then a new department head came in, Alvin Scaff. See, I was temporary head for two years, I guess, maybe two and a half. And Al came in, and he decided that it would be to the advantage of both disciplines to separate. So again, we didn't get a vote. It was just a *fait accompli*, you're out on your own. Bob Miller at that time was dean. I'm sure Alvin had discussed it with Bob.

So the department was separated administratively. We were still sharing the same hall, the same building, same classrooms. And then the following year Alvin decided that social work should no longer be a part of sociology, so they were moved out with a separate administration.

WL: So a very dramatic change.

HK: Yes. And I'm not at all sure when political science split from history. I think it was before anthropology split from sociology.

WL: I still have some letterhead that's—

HK: Do you?

WL: My previous occupant was John Beeler. Let's just—I want to ask just one more question, that is, what you think the biggest change or change—not necessarily one change, but most significant changes that have affected this institution in, well, since 1961?

HK: Well, certainly the size of the student body. Any time you increase size of anything, you have to have certain changes. I'm constantly amazed at the level of administration now. I remember speaking to someone, I don't recall who it was. I said, "Look, for crying out loud. Stan Jones [vice chancellor for academic affairs], who replaced Mereb, and Jim Ferguson, with their secretaries and their small administrative staff ran this institution, it was the same size. Now why do we have umpteen assistants to the chancellor, umpteen assistants to the vice chancellor, plus a bunch of vice chancellors? It's the same size student body."

The faculty actually has decreased in size. In attrition, they have not been replaced. Or they've been replaced on a one-year basis or two or three part-time people to take the position of one person. I was never replaced. They used two or three people in town that have MAs in anthropology. I don't see the need for that much administration

when the faculty is smaller and the student body just bounces back and forth between being four hundred more or four hundred fewer.

WL: So this growth of the administrative hierarchy—

HK: I think it's caused a great deal of change.

WL: That happened—what you're suggesting is that happened particularly in the seventies and eighties, or even—can you locate the growth a little bit?

HK: Well, I think it probably started with the arrival of Chancellor [William] Moran. And I think Vice Chancellor [Elisabeth] Zinser probably added a great deal to the structure, bureaucratic structure.

WL: Has that affected the, how has that affected faculty, if at all?

HK: Well, I can't speak for your generation. I think some of us in my generation became quite discontented when the emphasis seemed to be on administration and not on faculty development and not on meeting budgetary needs and that sort of thing. And the jargon became thicker and thicker.

WL: Okay.

[End of Interview]