

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH HELEN DAUSTER

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Ross Abramowitz: This begins an interview with Ms. Helen Dauster on Thursday, March 23, 2006, in Skillman, New Jersey, with Ross Abramowitz and Sandra Holyoak. Ms. Dauster, please tell us when and where you were born.

Helen Dauster: I was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, on March 10, 1927.

RA: Please tell us a little bit about your childhood, growing up in that area.

HD: Well, my father and mother owned an ice cream parlor/luncheonette, restaurant.

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: What was the name of it? Where was it located?

HD: The name was Thodes. It was in Jersey City and it was in a fairly decent neighborhood. It was a heck of a lot of work for my parents; it really was. That is not something that I ever would want to do and, later on, actually, they offered the place to Frank and to me and we said, "No thanks, this is not at all ... what we want to do." It was very tough, it really was, and it was during the Depression. So, I was born in '27, ... you know, that whole area, ... people did not ... have very much money. ... Often, the big treat of the day would be to go to an ice cream parlor and have some ice cream; this was not true after, by the way, after the war was over. It was during the time that we had gasoline rationing. We had, you know, sugar rationing. ... Almost everything was rationed.

SH: That would have impacted that, right?

HD: Oh, yes, yes, and my father made his own ice cream and they used to make their own candy, and Easter time was really something, because ... my father's brother, who had a place in New Brunswick, and another brother; everyone from our family came over and started a store of this sort, in various areas of New Jersey.

SH: Maybe we should back up and talk about that a little bit. Tell me about your father and his family and their background.

HD: Well, my father was born in Germany, in Flensburg, which is right on the border of Denmark. My mother was born in Bramsche, Germany and she had a pretty miserable life, because ... her parents died when she was about twelve, and I'm not sure whether the cause was the old, what they called the Spanish flu, or what it was, but that's when they died. I'm sorry; that's when the parents died. ... The oldest son, and there were quite a few siblings, I can't remember exactly how many, the oldest sibling, Heinz, was the one who inherited the store, and it was a small department store, they sold clothing and what have you, and he was quite well-to-do. So, he took on two of the siblings, my mother and her younger brother, and they became the *au pairs*. [laughter] They took care of the children and did things like that, but there were other brothers who were already in the United States, had come here before the war, and they said, "Come and we will take care of you," and then, my mother came and became an *au pair* for a wealthier uncle, who was here with his wife and family. ... She did that for any number of years, lived with an uncle and aunt, and then, she met my father and they got married here. They were married in 1924, I believe, yes.

SH: How old was she when she came to this country?

HD: She was probably around seventeen, something like that.

SH: She came alone then.

HD: She came with her younger brother.

SH: The brother came.

HD: The brother also came, and ... one of the older brothers took care of him. ... You know, everybody thought the place to go was the United States, the sidewalks were paved with gold and all that sort of nonsense, and his brothers helped my father. My father had an interesting life; I'll give that to you briefly. [laughter] ... His father was a professor in what they had, the *gymnasium*. So, he was a teacher, and then came the war, and my father was in the artillery and he became an artillery spotter. So, he was up in these balloons in World War I and he also [was] looking for, spotting, where the enemy was at that point. ... I have a wonderful picture of him with ... the helmet with the thing, with the spire going up.

SH: Wow, really?

HD: Yes. He was an officer in World War I. At the end of the war, what to do? Germany was a disaster area and, I mean, they were papering the walls with money, because it wasn't worth anything. He and his brother started a movie house and that lasted, I don't know, not terribly long, and then, the older brother, in fact, this is the one from New Brunswick, Alfred, my Uncle Alfred, said, "You must come over and we will ... help you, ... financially, so that you can have a store and do what we are doing," and so, that's what he did.

SH: This was your father.

HD: That's my father.

RA: Did he come over by himself or did he come with his brother?

HD: He came over by himself.

RA: Okay.

HD: Yes.

SH: What about his father and mother? What happened to them?

HD: My father's [parents], my grandparents? I never knew my grandmother. She died when my dad was two. My grandfather retired and stayed in Germany, and he would come and visit us,

occasionally, in the United States. ... I just remember this man with this long, long beard.
[laughter]

SH: Really?

HD: ... Who would play cards with me. I mean, we played that silly kids' game, "war," you know. ... He was quite an interesting guy. He really was, but I knew so little of him, because, although he died at, I think he was about eighty-seven, something like that, he died in Germany. He lived with a housekeeper and just had a little apartment there.

SH: He actually was in Germany during World War II.

HD: Yes, yes. We had a lot of relatives in Germany ... in World War II. ... It was kind of interesting, because ... the brother that had come over with my mother, the younger brother, was drafted in the American Army and he served in Africa. ... Another brother that my father had, Noli, who had a store in Morristown, New Jersey; a real lovely restaurant place, something like the one in New Brunswick, he and his wife decided, just before the war, that they really wanted to go back and visit relatives. So, they went back, and with two young children, who were born in the United States, two sons. Well, they were not allowed to leave Germany, and those sons were drafted into the German Army and one of them died on the Russian Front and one of them lost his leg, and that was Robert Thode, who then, many years later, came back to the United States, because he was a United States citizen. ... Frank [Dauster, her husband], may have mentioned this story, because, when Robert decided to get married, he asked Frank to be an usher at the wedding and Frank was a little hesitant. I mean, this ... [man] had been a German soldier and he had been an American soldier, [laughter] and that dissipated. I mean, he just got to know Robert and realized that Robert was not an SS or anything like that. He just had to do what he had to do.

RA: Did your brother also fight in World War II?

HD: ... He was drafted and he was in the ASTP [Army Specialized Training Program]. I guess that's what it was called, and he ... went to officer training camp, but he never [saw combat]. ... He went to Japan, later on, but he was never as active in the war as Frank had been, for example, and so, that's about it, for my brother.

SH: Your father, having been a university professor, *gymnasium* professor ...

HD: No, my grandfather.

SH: Your grandfather, excuse me. What training did all of these brothers have in running a restaurant?

HD: None, absolutely none, absolutely none. [laughter]

SH: I just wondered why.

HD: Well, you know, all the Greeks came here, in New Jersey, and started diners and they all helped each other. [laughter] So, one person started it and it was successful, and so, they helped the other one that came and it was really helping each other. Now, what we did not do was, so many people, ... Europeans, come over and they live in a ghetto and they all help each other and they all stay in the same area, and this was not true of our family. ... Well, they all stayed in New Jersey, a couple of them went to New York, but the uncle who ... was in the American Army, actually, had a store in New York, on Third Avenue in New York, and it was also a confectionary store. It was something that someone knew [how to do] in the beginning, and so, they sort of said, "We're going to help you, but I guess you're going to have to open that kind of a store. That's where our experience is," and it's really, really a tough life. It was for my mother, very, very tough, and then, for my father, too. ...

SH: What kind of hours would you keep in a store like that?

HD: Well, the hours are, morning, ... in the beginning, you would open up for breakfast, and then, ... you'd have the lunch crowd would come, and, in the evening, that was the time when they had what they called "blue plate specials," you know. [laughter] ... My mother, her younger sister arrived in New Jersey from Germany, and she lived with us. ... Also, she worked in the store and, of course, then, there were several people that my dad had hired, but it was really tough. ...

RA: Growing up, did you also work in the store?

HD: I sure did, yes. I mean, you know, when it came to making the strawberry ice cream, you know, I was there, cleaning the strawberries and cutting them up. [laughter] ... Of course, that was really wonderful, having your father making ice cream and also candy.

RA: I am sure you had a lot of friends because of this.

HD: Oh, ice cream, you know, that was down in the basement. There was this big ice cream machine, and then, ... I would just put my little cup underneath the spout and it'd be like Mister Softee, you know. [laughter] It was wonderful, and candy, ... they sold a lot of candy in those days. I mean, they still had salesmen come in and bring their boxes of candy, but at Easter time, making your own eggs and rabbits, I mean, that was a big thing. I mean, ... weeks before, we would be down in the basement and there'd be this huge vat, copper vat, of milk chocolate. ... Then, my father, with a special glove on, would pour the chocolate into one of the forms, and then, the forms would harden, and then, we'd have to take the clamps off and break it open and there would be this Easter bunny, and then, it had to be decorated. [laughter] So, I mean, those things were kind of fun.

SH: Did your friends from school come? Were you able to bring them to the store and let them see what you were doing?

HD: Not really, no. ... It really wasn't that kind of thing. [laughter] It was later that my friends would come to the store, because we were not too far from the local high school, Lincoln High School, and my father kind of did what my uncle did in New Brunswick with the college. When

there was a football game, ... if they won, they would be able to come and they would have a free hot fudge sundae, and, you know, this sort of thing. So, a lot of the young people came, and there were no places, like now, where kids can go after school and hang out. So, they would hang out and they would come and sit in the booths and have their Cokes. ...

SH: Did they have a specialty that they were well-known for?

HD: Well, it was mostly hot fudge sundaes and, you know, that sort of thing, but, after awhile, then, my parents didn't prepare dinners anymore. It was more a luncheon kind of place. ...

SH: Were the people coming in, in the morning, commuters into New York or were they working there in industries in Jersey City?

HD: No, ... they would be working there and we were close to a number of schools, so, the luncheon trade was a lot of schoolteachers. My teachers used to come and have [lunch].
[laughter]

SH: Did you come home for lunch?

HD: Oh, yes, yes. I came over, and, when I was older, ... I became a waitress and I would wait on the tables. ...

SH: Was your brother older or younger?

HD: Older.

SH: What were his jobs or his chores?

HD: I can't remember, really, what he did. I'm sure he had to do a lot, because he was a [man].
[laughter] ... I'm sure he also worked in the store. I just [do not] remember. ...

SH: Was German spoken in the home?

HD: Yes, but we had an apartment upstairs, and I did learn German, but I also learned a heck of a lot of English, because they had to start learning English. I mean, if they were going to run the store, and I don't remember their going to night school or anything like that, I just remember their picking it up, ... you had to do that. [laughter] ... I was in the store a lot. I mean, even when I was little, I got to know all the customers and they thought I was the cutest little thing. I would sit there on one of the counter stools, and so, I got to know all the regulars that came in. [laughter] So, there were good things and there were difficult [times], but I didn't realize that. I mean, life then, you didn't have TV, you had very few movies, I hardly ever went to the movies, and you didn't know how the other half lived; you really didn't. You thought, "This is the way it is," and, during the Depression, hey, that's pretty rough on you and I remember my parents, at the end of the day, going down and opening the cash register, to see how much money was in it. ... If it was a bad day and there wasn't a heck of a lot of money, it was a question of, "How do you

pay the mortgage? You know, how do you pay for supplies to keep the restaurant going?" and, looking back, that was pretty rough, terribly difficult on my mother.

SH: Was there any discussion of doing other work or your mother helping in some other place?

HD: No, no. Well, she had to work in the store. There was just no question about that at all.

SH: The aunt that came in to live with you, did that help?

HD: Well, it did, she was a delightful person. She really was. She was like my older sister. ... People would love her and, actually, a lot of them came because Molly was there. ... You know, you'd say, "I'd like to have a chocolate sundae," and, I mean, she'd go into that [freezer], get that ice cream out and put these huge helpings [in], and my father would say, "No, no, no, no, don't do that, don't do that." [laughter] ... She was just lovely; she really was. She was very special for me. I mean, I used to love to go into her room and look at her jewelry and her silk stockings, and she had one day off a week and she would go to, there was a German section in New York where there were movies and there were special little German restaurants. ... She and another woman would go there and she would get all dressed up and go. ... She was crazy; she really was. She fell in love with an Egyptian, who my father was not too happy with ...

SH: Did it pan out?

HD: Pardon.

SH: Did the Egyptian man pan out?

HD: Oh, no, no, no, the Egyptian on the motorcycle didn't, absolutely did not pan out. [laughter] Later on, she married a butcher and he was a strange guy and, later on, she and the butcher, Hans was his name, bought the store from my parents and they ran it for awhile, when my parents retired and moved to Leonia, New Jersey. Then, we had a real house, so, that was special.

SH: With the hours that they kept and the fact that they were making their own candy and ice cream, were all their social activities centered in the store or were there any outside activities?

HD: No. The only social activities were with relatives. We would go and visit relatives, or people would visit us. I never remember my parents going out and having a good time, or the kind of thing we do now, go to a concert or a play. I mean, that was just something you didn't do, because you didn't have the money, for one thing.

SH: Where would they go to visit, into New York or to New Brunswick?

HD: Well, they had relatives all over the place. I mean, we had some in Hempstead, New York, and Third Avenue, New York [City], and Morristown, Arlington, New Brunswick, [all in New Jersey], of course. So, those were the big [stops]. Madison, New Jersey, was another place. ... They all had confectionary stores. Some of them were more upper class, ... like Schrafs in New

York. I don't know whether you remember Schrafs at a room and restaurant or not, but that sort of thing. That kind of thing that has really gone by the boards. ...

SH: What name did they go under?

HD: The name, well, it was either Thode's or my mother's maiden name, Lenzing. ... I mean, it wasn't any spiffy name; it was just the Thode's. ...

SH: What year did you leave Jersey City and go to Leonia? Were you already married at that point?

HD: Oh, no, no, no. ... We were still living in Jersey City when I went to NJC, which became Douglass, ... and then, that year, ... they moved. They'd bought a lovely home in Leonia, New Jersey, and this was after the war and things were much better and, you know, much more prosperous, and they moved to Leonia. My father, more or less, retired. He did all kinds of other things. He was a crazy guy. ... So, it was not until my last year in high school that we moved to Leonia.

SH: With the family still having family members in Germany and many members here, what was the talk around the dinner table or among the family about what was going on in Europe at that point?

HD: Oh, it was crazy; it really was. ... They were terribly worried about the relatives that were left and what was going on, and we would always listen to the news. ... It was a tough time, because, during the war, my father had a German accent, my mother had a German accent, and he was actually investigated by, I don't know whether it was the FBI or whatever it was. ... Nothing came of that. ...

SH: Was he aware that he was being investigated?

HD: Oh, yes, oh, yes, and it was very upsetting, you know. ... That went on wherever anybody had an accent and they knew we were German. It really didn't affect the business very much, because people really accepted him, people especially my Aunt Molly, they loved her, [laughter] and my mother. I had a very sweet, wonderful mother and I'm sorry she had to work so hard all her life. ...

SH: Do you remember what the investigation consisted of? Were you aware of it?

HD: I don't, not very much.

SH: Were they accepting of it? Were they angry of it?

HD: No.

SH: Had they become naturalized citizens?

HD: Yes, yes, yes. ... They had become citizens, and they were worried about what was going on in Germany. ... I don't think they really ... understood Hitler at all, about what was going on, and since they had a brother who was in the Army here, ... I mean, everything was kind of torn. The other thing is that they were so damned busy all the time. So, it was kind of a question of how much you could be concerned. When the war was over, my parents went to Germany and visited. They went back and they visited the uncle who had brought her up at age twelve, after her parents died, and they did a lot of other [things]. They did a lot of traveling in Europe. ...

SH: Did they have to send food or anything? Did it ever get to that point?

HD: No, no. ... I can't remember that.

SH: Especially right after the war.

HD: Yes. They may have done some of that after the war, now that you mention it. ... I seem to remember packages being sent after the war.

SH: Before the war, had any of the members of your family been involved in any of the German-American organizations that were so prevalent?

HD: Not really, because they were so busy doing other things, which is really very good that that happened. [laughter]

SH: Some of them, I know, sent their children to the different *Bund* activities and things like that.

HD: No, I was never sent to that. I was sent to YWCA camp. I mean, they did ... when we had a little bit more money. That was my vacation, was going to [camp]. ... My brother and I were both very involved with the "Y," he with the YMCA also, and with a church. My father was not at all religious and my mother had been a Lutheran, but they never went to church. They sent us to a Lutheran church around the corner, and then, when my brother decided that the really good things were going on at the other church, [laughter] up not too far away, at the Dutch Reformed church, he said, "Come on, Helen, let's go." He was a great brother; he really was. He's dead now. He's no longer with us.

SH: How much older was he?

HD: He's two years older. He's the same age as Frank, as a matter-of-fact, and they had a very good relationship, ... and then, it was really through [him that we met]. My brother used to say, "Helen and I are going to go out for the evening," and then, we would go and we'd meet Frank, because my father was not too excited about Frank. [laughter] ...

SH: Really?

HD: No. Well, he really wasn't. ... He got very excited about Frank when Frank went on to graduate school and got his PhD, and my father insisted on buying him the cap and gown, and had lent us money. He had a great, great respect for education.

SH: That is one of the questions I wanted to ask.

HD: Yes, oh, very much.

SH: Did you and your brother, from the time you were small, know that this is why they were working so hard, for you to go on to school?

HD: Probably. ... Oh, one thing my father did do is, he taught us German. He insisted that we learn German. So, he would set an hour or so aside a week and would give us [lessons]. ... He really would have loved to have been a teacher, like his father, he really would, and he would have us learn German, which stood me in good stead when I got to high school, because I took advanced courses, and then, later on, I wound up majoring in German, but that's another story, why I did that; goes on until later. [laughter]

SH: At what point did you realize that you really were heading to college?

HD: Oh, I think I always knew that. Dad always said, you know. ... Instead of sending me to Lincoln High School, which only had sophomore, junior and senior classes, and was so overcrowded at the time that everyone else had to go down to, I believe it was the Greenville section, I can't remember, my best friend was going to St. Dominic Academy and, although I wasn't Catholic, he said, "Do you want to go there? It's a good school," and I said, "Okay," and I did. I went there for two years, and then, I transferred to the high school that was close by, Lincoln High School, and I got a very good education there with the Dominican nuns and I did not have to take, I was not asked to take, religion. ...

RA: Did you partake in any extracurricular activities in high school?

HD: Well, [I] worked a little bit on the yearbook, and, of course, I was only there two years, at the public high school, and the other one, I can't remember. ... There wasn't this big emphasis on women in sports, for example. We didn't have that at all. We'd go to the basketball games and root for the guys, but that was it. [laughter] ... I really can't remember doing a heck of a lot in high school, and, yet, there were clubs, you know. There was the language clubs and I was in that. ... I was in the college prep course, so, we did a lot in that respect.

RA: In terms of subjects, you said that you were in advanced subjects in German. Were there any other subjects that interested you, going into college, that you pursued?

HD: Well, in English, we had to write papers, and, for science, we had to write papers and I wrote a paper on Fleming, I guess it [was], can't remember his name, the man who discovered penicillin. I'll have to ask Frank about that, can't remember that right now.

SH: It is Alexander Fleming. [Editor's Note: Sir Alexander Fleming made the initial discovery of penicillin, the first antibiotic, in 1928.]

HD: Yes, and so, I got real excited about it. ... When we wrote papers, we wrote. I mean, in those days, you had little note cards and you had to do bibliographies. You really had to do a lot of work. So, when you got into college, ... you knew how to write a paper, and I wrote on him, and then, I decided I wanted to be a bacteriologist. That was what I wanted to do when I went to Douglass, ... which I call it now, because I've been calling it that for years now. ... I had taken physics and chemistry. I wasn't terribly good at chemistry, but, in high school, ... I had very good grades. I did very well in English and history and all those subjects, and I was a good student. I really, you know, came home with wonderful grades and [laughter] was much better, actually, in high school. Well, you know, in college, you're not that great, but ... I think I graduated seventh highest in the class. ...

SH: You had gone to the Dominican school, and then, come back. Was that hard or was that a popular decision on your part?

HD: That was my decision, and it was my decision because I wanted to go to the public high school [laughter] and I didn't want to wear a uniform for the rest of my life. ... I went to the Mother Superior. ... She was very, very sweet and she sat there and she said, "Helen, what is the reason that you want to go to Lincoln?" and I said, "I really want to take solid geometry and trigonometry," and that wasn't being offered, and she just looked at me and smiled and said, "All right, I understand." [laughter] So, then, I went to [Lincoln], and I really had [a good education]. I mean, that was a good high school at the time, too. ... It was a different [setting]. ... I liked having boys in the class, I really did. ... When I went to Douglass, later on, I took ... some courses at Rutgers, which a lot of the women, at that time, didn't, but that's because I was taking advanced German courses and also wound up taking an astronomy course at Rutgers, for example. ...

SH: Obviously, we and the Mother Superior understand why you went to Lincoln High School. [laughter] That would have been in 1942.

HD: Yes, because I graduated in '44, from Lincoln.

SH: Talk to us about 1941, in December, when Pearl Harbor was attacked and what you remember. Your brother would have been graduated by then as well, right? He would have been a senior.

HD: My brother, yes, yes.

SH: He would have been right there.

HD: Yes. ... Well, that whole time was very interesting. I mean, we did have shades on the front of the store then. Oh, yes, we pulled those down because of air raids and and we had so many of the young people from the high school, ... who'd gone to our store all the time, come back ... in their uniforms. ... My father would always give them, you know, something extra

and it was always very special when they came back. ... It became almost like a family, it really did, and that was a special time. It really was.

SH: Do you remember hearing about the attack on Pearl Harbor? It was on a Sunday. What was the reaction in your family?

HD: Yes. ... I don't remember that much about it.

SH: Because I was thinking, with your brother being the age, that he would have been still in high school.

HD: Well, ... let's see, how old was he in '41?

SH: He would have still been in high school, probably.

HD: Yes, he was still in high school, yes.

RA: He would be about seventeen, eighteen.

HD: I don't know. I didn't have the kind of conversations with my parents the way we had them with our kids, because we had a lot more time with our children, and, with one's parents working morning, noon and night, ... it was really tough. We did have a radio at the time and my parents would listen to the radio, and I knew they were terribly concerned about that, ... you know, looking back, but the time was so [different]. For a kid, at that time, it was not the kind of impact that today's [war in] Iraq has on people, it seems to me.

RA: Your brother took part in the war. You said not very extensively, but he took part in the war. How did your father feel when he was called upon to take part?

HD: I think he was probably; you mean because my father was German and had been in the German War?

RA: Right, and, also, because your father was interrogated, for his son to go fight for the US when he was being interrogated.

HD: It really didn't bother him that much. It really didn't. ... He wanted very much to become a United States citizen, and he became a United States citizen. ... I'm sure he worried about my brother possibly having to go to Europe, but it didn't turn out that way, which was, you know, fortunate, but ... the war was such a strange time. It really was. ...

SH: Do you remember when the rationing went into effect? How far into the war were we when you then realized your father would have difficulty getting sugar and things like that? Was that immediate or was it something that came along gently or slowly?

HD: It came along fairly slowly, but I remember the ration books and I remember how difficult it was ... for him to get materials, but he always managed to get some things, somewhere along

the line. I remember the old Oleo. Do you remember Oleo? where you had this little thing in it, ... a little bead of a yellow color, so that you could mix it up, so [that] it would look like butter. [laughter]

SH: It became this color. Yellow was a stretch. [Editor's Note: Sandra is explaining that the tablecloth's colors matched the color the Oleo turned.]

HD: And, you know, everything was rationed, but it was just, "This is the way of the world. This is it." ...

SH: Was anyone that you knew an air raid warden, where they would go and check the windows? Was your family involved in it?

HD: No, no.

SH: What about politics before the war? Was your father a Democrat or a Republican? What did they think of Roosevelt?

HD: They didn't think much of Roosevelt, they really didn't, but we had, and it was really very interesting, and this I do remember very much, ... everybody in my family loved to talk about absolutely everything. ... So, in the evening, after a dinner, the women would get up and they would get the dishes and they would go, and, usually, the kids would leave, and I would always stay at the table. I loved hearing them talk, [laughter] because they were always quarreling about this, that and the other, over, it was the war and what was going on in the war and were the Germans right? and what was going on. ... There were pros and cons the whole time and my Uncle Fred, the younger brother of my mother, was a most interesting guy. He was the one who went into the American Army. He was just a philosopher in his own [right]. You know, he'd keep a little notebook and [he would record] his thoughts, "What is the world coming to and who?" you know, this sort of thing, "and where are we in this world? [laughter] We are only on one small planet and there are so many things going on." I mean, I just thought he was great. He was my hero, you know. [laughter] ... Then, my mother would come in and say, "Please, stop, let's not quarrel, let's not raise our voices." [laughter] ... I think the war was very difficult for my mother, because she still had some brothers there and I think she was terribly torn, and it wasn't a matter of, you know, politics, but my father and mother were Republicans. In Jersey City, you had Mayor [Frank] Hague, who ran the machine, [laughter] and, you know, my parents just were very upset about that, but my father became a Democrat, later on. He really did, and so did my mother. ... When our kids were young, Frank and my two boys, we'd go down to Fort Lauderdale, [Florida], and visit my father and Frank would say, "And we're not going to talk politics. We're not going to do that." This was much after the war, of course, and so, the kids would sit there at the table and my father would say, "Okay, what do you think about China being in the UN?" or something like that, and the kids would say, "Mmm," [laughter] and my father would say, "I think it's a good thing. This should be done," you know, and my kids, the eyes would go up, and then, later on, when it came to abortion and things like that, ... again, he felt it was a woman's right. ... You know, he was a thinking person. He really was, and I think ... they were both very sad about what happened in their homeland, but, for them, they did come

here fairly early. My mother was fairly young and it's just the homeland, "This is where I was born. What's happening there? What's happening to my family?" that sort of thing.

SH: Were there certain customs or traditions that they kept and passed on to you?

HD: Well, most of them were, I guess, German traditions, and, of course, the Christmas tree is the old German tradition, but we always opened our presents at Christmas Eve. We didn't wait until the morning, and it was always a matter of Santa Claus or St. Nicholas, or whoever, would come in the evening and the table, huge table, would be the dining room table, and everybody would have a dish, with some candies and some fruit, always oranges, and nuts and things like that. ... That's very much their tradition and the others, and that's been the other tradition that has been taken on by ... Americans, as you leave something out for St. Nicholas or Santa Claus, but ... my father was not religious at all. I don't know whether my grandfather was. I really have no idea, but, sometimes, my father's feeling was, "If there were a God, why would he let this happen?" you know, and my mother would [gasp]. [laughter] So, he didn't force us to [attend church] or tell us we had to go to a certain [church], but I did make Confirmation. In the Lutheran Church, you do make a Confirmation, as did my brother. ...

SH: You talked about Mayor Hague and the machine. Do you remember them ever talking about any muscling on Hague's part regarding your father's store, because he was a Republican? We have heard a lot of stories about Hague.

HD: Yes. [laughter] I don't think it was as much that as a feeling, that my father said, you know, "I am working hard, I am doing everything I can, and there are people out there that are not and that are being told to vote so-and-so and getting their free basket of food or their turkeys or whatever, and that's not right." ... So, it was that kind of thing, and he wasn't that much against Roosevelt, and, when Wendell Willkie came along, who was ...

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE-----

RA: Side two, tape one.

SH: Please, continue.

HD: Well, we were talking about the fact that the family, ... the extended family, would get around the table and talk and it was, very often, politics, heavy-duty politics. ... There were a lot of them who were very conservative, ... conservative Republicans. So, my father fell in the moderate [category], but, then, you still have lots of arguments and discussions about what's going on. [laughter] ... My mother died at age sixty-two and that was a very sad time, ... and then, my father remarried, several years later, and he married a gal who was a Democrat and she persuaded him that this was the way to go. ... You know, at that point, he thought that was the way to go, with the Democrats. I guess Lyndon Johnson was the first Democrat that he had voted for, but he was always very interested in politics, very interested in everything. ... He should really have been a teacher, and, when Frank first started publishing his books, and they were in Spanish, my father got a Spanish dictionary and he said, "You're giving me this book; I'm going to read this book," and he would try to read it. ... He knew French. He had learned

French in school and he was very interested in philosophy and history, and so, he was always very interesting to talk to, when he wasn't telling me what to do. [laughter]

SH: I was going to ask, was he a disciplinarian?

HD: Yes, he was.

SH: Was that in his field or did your mother also discipline you?

HD: No. My mother was a sweet, wonderful person. ... Well, her parents had died and here I was, this little girl, and she gave me just all her love, and hardly ever told me what to do, because my father was always doing that. So, she didn't have to. [laughter]

SH: He was actually the authority figure.

HD: Oh, yes, oh, yes. He was the authority figure, and he became much better as he aged, and Frank will say that, too, because, when Frank met him, he was, "Grrr." ...

SH: Did you meet Frank before you went to college?

HD: No, in college.

SH: Why New Jersey College for Women?

RA: Did you have any other choices besides New Jersey College for Women?

HD: Yes, I did, in North Carolina. I really wanted to go to the University of North Carolina, and I don't know why, but that was where I wanted to go. My dearest friends were going to Swarthmore and Vassar and places like that, and we just could not afford that, and then, I got a scholarship to NJC and that clinched it. That was it. [laughter]

RA: Do you remember the specific scholarship you got or what it took care of?

HD: The tuition.

RA: It was a full-tuition scholarship.

HD: Full-tuition scholarship, yes. ... My father didn't have to pay that. ... By that time, things were loosening up a little and the business is getting better and, ... you know, my father was more prosperous than he had been. So, college was [not a burden], and he always said, "You're going to go to college." So, I never even worried about it and I never even thought about anything else, and this was not true of other children in the extended family. They went to secretarial school and things like that, but he said, "No, you're going to college." So, I went to college.

SH: You had talked about wanting to major in the sciences. When did that change come about?

HD: When I started taking the sciences in college. [laughter]

SH: You went with that in mind at that point.

HD: Yes, I really did. Bacteriologist, that was going to be it, and I took zoology and it was okay, but I took history and I was excited about history. I had a wonderful history professor, a Dr. [George P.] Schmidt, whom you may have heard about, and, all of a sudden, things were falling into place. ... I took English and ... took Shakespeare and contemporary American English literature and sociology and political science, and they were just all wonderful eye-openers, you know. It was a wonderful time. It was a terrific time.

SH: Before we talk about NJC, you said North Carolina was your first choice. Had you gone to North Carolina? What piqued your interest in North Carolina?

HD: No. ... I don't know. Now that I think back on it, I don't know, but ... maybe it was also a state school, so [that] it wasn't as expensive. I mean, I really would love to have gone to one of the "Seven Sisters," but that was not to be. [laughter] ... [Editor's Note: The "Seven Sisters" colleges are Wellesley College, Mount Holyoke College, Barnard College, Vassar College, Bryn Mawr College, Radcliffe College and Smith College.]

SH: Was there someone in the high school who was helping to direct you? I know guidance counseling was not a part of the curriculum at that point.

HD: Oh, yes. There was a guidance counselor.

SH: There was?

HD: Yes, yes, we had a guidance counselor, and, maybe, thinking back, maybe she had put that bee in my bonnet, I don't know, but I guess it was also getting away from Jersey City and Leonia at that point, you know, just getting away, and New Brunswick was not that far away.

SH: At that stage, because you go to NJC in 1940 ...

HD: '44.

SH: 1944, excuse me. Prior to your going to college, the war has been going on now for three years. How did that impact your father's business, being in Jersey City, with all the war effort activities, the shipyards and all of that?

HD: Well, actually, the business picked up, tremendously, as the war went on, because of the gasoline rationing. People couldn't go anyplace, so, they would come and ... they would enjoy going out for an evening, and it was a nice place. ... We had booths and we had a place where people could come and sit around for a little bit in the evening and enjoy themselves, and so, business picked up, shall we say, during the war.

SH: In school, were you involved in any of the activities that we hear about, war bonds and wrapping bandages, any of that?

HD: We didn't do a heck of a lot of that. We did knitting. [laughter] ... Yes, we did knitting for the [troops]. I don't know what we'd knit, but, my God, those poor guys. [laughter] ... "What's this?"

SH: Were you writing to anyone before you went to NJC? Were there any boys from the neighborhood or any other people?

HD: No, I really wasn't. I graduated from high school when I was just seventeen, and my father was very strict about going out. [laughter] I mean, my outlet was at the Dutch Reformed church, where I went with my brother, and we had really good sessions there with, I don't know, ... parties and things like that, for young people, but that's the most that I ever did. I didn't do a heck of a lot of dating when I was [in high school]. I did go to the senior prom, but it wasn't the kind of dating that the kids today do, no. [laughter]

RA: When you came to NJC, where did you live? How did the housing work there?

HD: I lived on, ... well, it was called Douglass Campus at the time. There are a number of housing groups and this is where the "horseshoes" are. There are two horseshoes on Nichol Avenue and there are houses from AA, and then, going around. I was in H, and then, I don't know, N or something, and then, started the other horseshoe, ... and they were all alphabetically done. ...

SH: Did you ever live in the German House?

HD: I lived in the German House for three years, after living on [the Douglass Campus], after my freshman year, because I was taking German courses and one of the gals who was there asked me if wanted to live there. ... The German House was one of the larger [homes]. Being at the end of the horseshoe, it was large and had a lovely living room and had more things going on than the other [houses], and we had to speak German there. We had to. In the German House, you spoke German all the time, unless you were down in; no, no, unless you were singing. Then, you could do, you know, [Mrs. Dauster sings], "Where did you put my..." [laughter] You know, people would "wink-wink," and they had the honor system there. So, we spoke German, but, sometimes, we sang English. [laughter] ... The interesting thing about the German House [was], oh, well, the women who were there [were] very interesting women, and the only place you could smoke, in any of the houses, was down in the basement. ... They had some chairs there and you could sit and chat, and, boy, did we have bull sessions there, I mean, just talking about everything in the world, I mean, ... politics, religion, philosophy. It was a good time. It was an interesting time in my life.

SH: Tell us about the curfews you had, mandatory chapel, some of the traditions.

HD: Well, mandatory chapel, we had to go, I think it was twice a week, and I think ... all the men had to be out of the living room by eleven o'clock at night, and we had to be back at eleven.

... There was this honor system, but, somehow or another, ... things were circumvented, because I remember going to, I guess it was after a prom or something like that. If you signed out for ... another student's house, ... from there on, you're on your own. So, you know, you have some liberal parents and we used to go to Nancy's house. We'd sign out for Nancy's house, and then, after that, you know, we'd go down the shore and do things like that. [laughter] So, you did have curfews and it was strict, to a certain extent. I don't remember it as being that bad; go ahead.

RA: You had a housemother that watched over you when you lived in the German House.

HD: Well, actually, you'd have a house chairman, and I was the senior house chairman in the German House. ... There were about, I think, twenty-four girls there. In our particular house, there was an apartment for a German professor, but she was not in charge. The house chairman was in charge, and, if anything ever went wrong, it was up to the house chairman to do it. She was there to make sure that we didn't do too much singing in English. [laughter] So, she was a wonderful person, wonderful person.

RA: Living in the German House, did you eat your meals there or did you go to the dining hall?

HD: No, no. We went to the dining hall. We went to the Cooper Dining Hall, but we would sit and all the language departments would have a table. So, we would sit with our [language department]. You know, I guess we had two tables for the German [group] and two tables for French and two for Spanish, things like that.

RA: I read that the German House had a big Christmas get-together every year. Do you remember much about that, or did you run that?

HD: Oh, yes, yes. ... We would put on small plays, we would sing, we would do things like that, and ... that was a lot of fun. ... That was under the auspices, usually, of the professor who was living in the house. I mean, she was in charge of that. ... Oh, she did the whole thing of the, there was an *Adventskranz*, you know. ... You'd have candles and you'd light a few candles every week, and she did a lot of the German things that, really, I didn't even know about, because we didn't do them at home. [laughter] ... I don't know why I lived there that long. ... The first year I got there, it was so comfortable and so nice and I enjoyed the whole, you know, having a large place like that, and the speaking German didn't really bother me one little bit, because ... I was [fluent]. I don't do it very well anymore, by the way. [laughter] I can understand it. ... So, can I pause for a minute? ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: Please, continue.

HD: When we first got to Douglass, you would have someone who would sort of be your mentor, and there were two wonderful people ... in Douglass H, the first place that I lived, who were sort of mentoring me. ...

SH: Do you remember their names?

HD: I would remember if I looked in the [year]book. [laughter] ... Of course, in the small houses, you didn't have any housemother, but you had a senior house chairman. It was just up to you to be back on time. ...

SH: Really?

HD: Yes, and the watchman. [laughter] There would be a watchman [who] came around. ... So, the first year was very interesting. ... I was never homesick. I never went home, except for Thanksgiving and Christmas, but it wasn't the sort of thing, which happens now, I guess, and had happened maybe then, too, was people just packing up every weekend and going home, because there were always things going on at college that were interesting, even the first year, because there weren't many men around at all, because that was still the war years. The men hadn't really started coming back until a little later than that.

SH: Were there mixers, though? Did they continue that tradition, before the men started coming back?

HD: No, no, but we did go to USOs. We went to Camp Kilmer, [which] would have [events]. The officers would invite the college gals to come. So, we'd go to dances and things there, and there were other things. We did meet young [men]. I don't know, I certainly had dates with sailors and, you know, people. ... I don't know where I met them. [laughter] ... Other students would have brothers come and, you know, ... you would have dates in that way, but you didn't have dates the way ... we had them later on.

SH: Did you go to the fraternity houses for any of the parties?

HD: Well, that was later. ... There were some fraternities going at that time and we did go to fraternity parties, yes. So, that was one of the things.

SH: What about your uncle, being that he had a place in New Brunswick? Did you stop in there at all?

HD: By that time, my uncle had sold the place. So, it was no longer [there]. Yes, so, I would hear a lot about what had been, but it was not [in] my time.

RA: Were you part of the church choir at NJC?

HD: Yes, I was, yes. I was an alto, in the back row, and I loved it. I really did, and that was a Professor McKenzie, was the Scottish choirmaster, and quite a taskmaster, too. I mean, we all had to get up at a certain time and [sit] down at a certain time, but I loved it. I loved the singing, I loved being part of the choir. That was one of my special things.

SH: What about the Sacred Path?

HD: Oh, that was so silly. [laughter] There was this path and it was [just] so, and you couldn't go down that path as a freshman. ... You know, it was an easier way to get to College Hall than to go all the way around, and I did get in with a group of radicals at that time. I did the Sacred Path and I did that. I wasn't the head radical, by any matter of means, but ... we were always a questioning group. ... I mean, "Why? You know, we're adults. Why should we have to do these things?" and, [in] the beginning, you know, wearing our little bunny hats and things like that, that was just [silly], you know.

SH: As freshmen, right?

HD: As freshmen, you know. ...

SH: Please, describe what they were like. You had to wear a certain color, right?

HD: ... It was green, I believe. [laughter] It was green and it just seemed sort of ridiculous, but, you know, we went along with it. We were freshmen, what could we do? and the sophomores would be able to question us about anything, in the way we walked ... and what we did. You know, they would lord it over us, and so, that was [the routine]. ...

SH: As a sophomore, did you return the favor?

HD: No, because, again, we got to be radical then, you see. [laughter]

SH: That was when you went to the German House.

HD: Well, that's part of it. ... [We] really weren't all that radical, but it was a matter of really questioning everything, and, if you start questioning things, you questioned, "Why are we doing this?" and it was at that point, let's see, the beginning of my junior year, I met Frank, but, I mean, these men are coming back from the war.

SH: Talk about that a little bit. That starts in 1945.

HD: Yes, and that influences you, too. I mean, they're coming back and they're saying, "We're not going to go wear dunce hats and things like that. We're coming back [to study]." Some of them were twenty-six, twenty-seven years old, and we met them at fraternity parties, you know. You'd be dating older men at that time, and so, college began to change. When we were first there, you couldn't go to Cooper Hall, the eating hall, without a skirt on. ... So, what we did was, we left our jeans hanging in the coatroom at Cooper Hall, not our jeans, I'm sorry, our skirts, hanging there, and we'd pull up our jeans, put the skirt on and go in. ...

SH: How radical were jeans back then?

HD: Oh, jeans weren't all that radical.

SH: They were not.

HD: No. We could wear them anytime, okay, except at functions. Dean's house for tea, you should wear gloves, you know, and that kind of thing.

SH: How often did you get invited to the Dean's house?

HD: Once. [laughter]

RA: Who was the dean at that time?

HD: Dean [Margaret Trumbull] Corwin, at the beginning, yes.

RA: Do you have any funny stories about her?

HD: She was just such a prim lady. She really was. ... She was very sweet and very nice and it was the Dean [Leah] Boddie, who was the Dean of Students, who was the one who, you know, ... told us exactly what to do and when to be in, you know, so that Dean Corwin's [function] was a matter of having people to tea and speaking very nicely. ... She was just a very sweet person, and Dean Boddie did her dirty work for her, you know. [laughter]

SH: How long had Mabel Douglass been away from the college at that point?

HD: I don't know how long, but she wasn't there when I was there. ... Douglass Campus was named after her, when that was [first] called Douglass Campus, and then, of course, it became the name of the college later on [in 1955].

SH: Being in the German House, was there ever any talk about the famous Hauptmann-Bergel Case? [Editor's Note: In the mid-1930s, a scandal arose over the dismissal of Lienhard Bergel, a professor in the New Jersey College for Women German Department and an opponent of Nazism, by department chairman Friedrich Hauptmann, who was known for his pro-Nazi leanings. Hauptmann disappeared from the United States in the years before Pearl Harbor, returned to Europe and was captured in Slovakia near the end of World War II, where he had been serving as a Nazi official.]

HD: No, but my uncle, Uncle Alfred, did know him.

SH: Hauptmann?

HD: Yes, did know Hauptmann, and there was quite a bit of talk about that in our family circle, about him and about what eventually happened to him. I mean, ... it was interesting. [laughter]

SH: What did they say?

HD: Well, they ... liked him. They liked him as a professor and ... as a person. So, they were really kind of taken aback by this whole scandal coming out. ... I don't remember that much about it, quite frankly, and I never met the man, ... but that was quite a bit of a scandal.

SH: When he was found in Germany then, after the war, did anything come out of that?

HD: Yes. I think that was actually before. Yes, that was before I came to Douglass, to NJC. The Hauptmann thing broke open before that. ...

RA: I also read that you went to the University of Maine for two summers while you were at NJC. Can you elaborate on that?

HD: Yes. ... Well, that was really interesting, because that was, again, my father saying, "What are you going to do this summer?" and I said, "Oh, well, I don't know what," and he said, "Well, if you're not doing anything, do you want to go to school someplace and take some extra courses?" ... I thought that was a really neat idea and I loved the thought of going up to Maine, and I don't know why it was Maine, but it turned out to be Maine, and that [was] in '45. It was the first summer I was there that I remember V-J Day, very vividly, on the campus, and the excitement, and, when we heard about it, I mean, it was just something.

SH: What happened?

HD: Oh, it was just so exciting and wonderful, and there was a camp there, too, and there were a lot of soldiers. They had ASTP on campus. So, we were mingling with these young men. They were, I think, the only men on campus, but there were a lot of them there and they were there all summer long, so, we got to know a lot of them. We learned to smoke there, because they got all [these] free cigarettes all the time, [laughter] and I took math courses there. ... I decided that I would get rid of my math requirement from NJC, and so, I took that dreaded trigonometry and calculus. [laughter] I took that, and then, they only had two-credit courses, so, I had to go back the next summer ... to make up the six credits for that, and, in the meantime, I took some English courses, which I loved taking up there. ... I loved being up there. It was wonderful. It was so different from NJC and it was at Orono. ... I had met this young man, who was twenty-six, a veteran, coming back, and I was going steady with him that whole summer, and so, it was an interesting summer. It was good.

SH: Was he from Maine?

HD: No, he was from Boston. He was from Boston town.

SH: Tell us about meeting Mr. Dauster.

HD: Well, you really want to know all this? [laughter] ... Well, I was living in Leonia at the time and my parents said; ... my brother wanted to have a New Year's Eve party, I think it was. It was Christmas or New Year's Eve, but it was a party around that time.

SH: Where was he going to school? Was he in school then?

HD: ... He went to Newark College of Engineering, yes, my brother and I were fairly close all those years, and so, my brother said he wanted to have a party and he wanted to have some of his friends come, and two of his friends went to Rutgers. ... So, we had a party that night. ... My

parents, very conveniently, very sweet, they left. I don't know where they went, but they left. [laughter] So, everybody drank liquor. ... My brother's friend, Bill Cooney, brought Frank, and so, Frank came to the house and he was talking mainly with one of my friends, Terry Ghasso, who was there, and I was mainly with this other guy, ... but it was a party. ... It was a nice house and the basement was all finished, and so, we had it down there. ... So, I didn't really get to know Frank all that well, but he then called, about a month later, and he called the German House, since Terry lived in the house. ... I answered the phone and he said, "Is Terry there?" and I said, "No, may I take a message?" and he said, "No." Then, he said, "Is Helen Thode there?" [laughter] and I said, "Yes," and he said, "Could I talk to her?" and I said, "This is she, second-best." [laughter] So, he said, "Oops," and he said [that] ... the guys were going to some little roadhouse here and having pizza and beer, and would I like to go? ... So, after a pause, I said, "All right, I'll go." I wasn't busy that night and that's when we started going out, and we really enjoyed each other and we talked a lot. My God, we talked. [laughter]

SH: Where was he from?

HD: Frank? Frank is from East Orange, New Jersey. ... At that point, he was not yet living in the Chi Phi House, which was on College Avenue. He was living in the barracks. They were there at some kind of barracks.

SH: At the Raritan Arsenal?

HD: Yes, Raritan Arsenal, ... but we kept seeing each other and did a lot of walking around and having cheap beers. I really hated beer, but I drank it. [laughter] ... You know, we grew on each other, we really did, and then, pretty soon, he moved to the Chi Phi House, and then we started having Chi [Phi] parties and all kinds of things, and soph hops, and things really started going after the war. They really took off. I mean, we had big orchestras coming to the gym, the old gym, [the College Avenue Gymnasium], and wonderful, wonderful dances. He asked me to a dance, and then, we got there and ... he told me he couldn't dance. [laughter] So, I took him in one of the hallways and I gave him a mini-lesson there, [laughter] and I started leading him on the floor. ... That has come back to haunt me, because we had a dance here not too long ago and Frank, of course, with his leg problem, doesn't do anymore dancing. ... This guy asked me to dance and I hadn't danced in a long time, and he said, "Oh, come on, come on." So, I started dancing with him and I said, "I am really not doing this very well, Tom. I think maybe we'd better sit down," and he said, "You would be fine if you would stop leading." [laughter] ... After the war, those last years at Douglass were really very interesting and exciting, and I was taking courses that I loved. ... I took a couple of courses at Rutgers, because I had exhausted the literature courses, and I was doing contemporary German literature, which was really wonderful, because that was postwar literature. ... So, I was taking that at [Rutgers], with another gal from the German House. ... We came over and we took courses, and then, of course, I met Frank and we had coffee at a bread luncheonette. ... Then, for some reason, I had the opportunity to take an astronomy course and, although I wasn't much of a scientist, that was always kind of an exciting thought and that was great.

SH: Did they use the observatory? Was that still being used?

HD: Yes. We went to that little observatory, [the Schanck Observatory on Rutgers Old Queens Campus]. I couldn't believe it. We went there and we had, can't remember the professor's name, but he was a typical professor, he really was. ... He would open the telescope and we would see Saturn and we would see the rings. You could really do that, in this little, tiny observatory. It was very exciting. Of course, then, he took us out to Buccleuch Park, with his flashlight, was like a torch, you know, on a clear evening, and he had the whole class there, and there weren't too many women in the class, mostly men. ... We're there, in the dark, and he's got this flashlight, his funny, little fedora on his head, and the police come along. [laughter] A police car comes along and says, "What are you doing here in the dark, and what are these people doing here?" and he said, "This is an astronomy class and I am [the professor]," and the policeman said, "Yes, okay, tell me [more]." So, he was finally convinced that we were really an astronomy class and we were looking at the sky and the constellations. ...

RA: I do not think we clarified yet what your majors were in college.

HD: Well, I started majoring in psychology and I took almost everything for a major in psychology, and then, I sort of exhausted their courses, to a certain extent, and, frankly, I had some problems. Not personal problems, but the department was not what I thought it should be. ... It was like having a double major, but I wound up with a German major, and I really wanted to go on with psychology afterwards, but I never managed to do that, because I had to start putting Frank through school. ... The only job I could really get, and that my parents would let me live in New Brunswick [for], I lived in Highland Park, actually, was teaching. ... So, I got an emergency certificate and I came down here, and so, I could be with Frank, because he was doing his graduate work, getting his master's at that time. So, I lived in Highland Park.

SH: When did you and Frank marry?

HD: 1949. So, we got engaged in '48. We were pinned in '47. You know, we had a pinning, and then, ... my father was very upset when we got engaged. ... Well, he was really not terribly excited about Frank, and so, when we got engaged, ... I had the ring on my finger, this little ring that we got together, [laughter] and I had worn my gloves when my father picked us up in the car, because we didn't want him to have an accident on the way home. ... We got home and we told him we were engaged, and he said, "Okay." He said, "Perhaps we ought to have some wine with lunch, then, and toast you," and that was it, but, before that, when he knew that Frank was serious; Frank never told you this story? ... He sort of had to ask for my hand in marriage, in the old way, and he was sitting with my father, and this is before we got the ring. ... My father's sitting there, ... just he and Frank, and Frank is smoking like a [chimney], you know, and puffing away. ... So, Frank said, "I want to marry your daughter and I have to finish, get my bachelor's degree," ... and on and on he went, and my father didn't say much. ... Then, Frank finally said, "Well, what do you have to say, Mr. Thode?" and he said, "You smoke a lot." So, then, he called me and he called my mother in, we're all sitting there in the sun parlor, and he said, "Okay, Frank, now, let's get this straight. You're going to finish your bachelor's degree. Then, what are you going to do? You said you're going to;" Frank said, "I'm going to get my master's." "Okay, what are you going to do after that?" "I want to get my PhD." "Okay, and what's Helen going to do while you're doing this?" and Frank said, "Work, I guess," [laughter] and that's what happened. ...

RA: When he went to pursue his education, he went to Yale and Wesleyan, I believe.

HD: He went to Yale. He taught at Wesleyan.

RA: Okay. You had to travel with him.

HD: Well, we were married; I would do that.

RA: Right. Was that a strain on you? How did that work out, in terms of teaching and your profession?

HD: Well, I never thought of teaching, really, as my profession. It was the kind of thing that I wound up doing, because I couldn't really do any[thing else]. You couldn't do anything without a graduate degree, really. ... So, I taught in New Brunswick, two years, and in the Lincoln School, which is not too far from the campus, stick with that Lincoln, you know. ... Then, when we went up to Wesleyan, I got a job, again, teaching, and that was in a little, three-room schoolhouse, ... really in the sticks of Middletown, [Connecticut], and that was a bad year. The woman who had had the job had had a nervous breakdown, [laughter] ... and it was teaching a class of first and second grade, thirty kids, twenty first graders. Most of them had never had kindergarten. I mean, I know why that woman had a nervous breakdown. So, I decided to get pregnant. It was the only [alternative]; it was a way out. [laughter] ... When I did, they sent me a letter and they said, "Dear Miss Dauster, we accept your resignation for reasons of pregnancy." "Miss Dauster;" I should have kept that letter. I thought it was so funny, but that was not one of my better experiences, in doing that, and, of course, Frank was going and taking courses at Yale, teaching full-time. I was teaching full-time, and then, ... Frank got a raise. ... The raise may have meant he was, I think, making, at that point, three thousand dollars. So, we all celebrated. We went to Howard Johnson's for dinner and we came home, and, nine months later, there was a baby, [laughter] and then, we never went anywhere, because we didn't have any money. We really and truly did not. ... Finally, we did get a babysitter and we went to the movies, and Frank said, "Okay, now, here's the thesis, there's the baby. [If] there's a fire, you take the thesis and go. [laughter] Then, you get the baby," and he absolutely refuses to confess [to saying that]. He says, "I never said that." So, he did say that. [laughter]

SH: Had you done the typing for this thesis?

HD: No, I was not a typist. I did not go to that typing school that my cousins went to. [laughter]

SH: We have heard wives say that they not only worked, but they typed it.

HD: No. Yes, we had somebody else type the thesis. ... No, that would have taken me forever to do that. ... After baby one, I got a job teaching, tutoring a little girl, and then, I was teaching kindergarten for a little while, until I got pregnant again, and that was not because I didn't [want to work there]. That was because, at that point, German measles was going around and you really had to be careful when you were pregnant ... not to get German measles.

SH: They were aware of that then.

HD: Oh, yes. So, I quit that job, and, oh, we just made do, and then, you know, he was there five years, I guess. ...

SH: At Wesleyan?

HD: At Wesleyan, and then, we came back to Rutgers, which was going to be something he would only be doing ... until something else came along, and then, thirty-seven years later, you know.

RA: I just wanted to backtrack a little bit to when Frank came back from the war. There was a huge influx of men coming back to Rutgers and the area. I wondered how the school changed when they all came back.

HD: How Rutgers changed?

RA: Yes. I also know that it merged at that time, too.

HD: That didn't really mean that much to us. I mean, that was kind of a thing that goes on at a state level, because, ... you know, it's not what's going on now, [which] is so completely different. [Editor's Note: Mrs. Dauster is referring to the merger of the undergraduate colleges of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, which began in 2006 and was completed in 2007 with the establishment of the School of Arts and Sciences.] There, it didn't really concern Douglass or NJC that much. I mean, it wasn't a matter of, at that point, [that] there would be co-education at one place or another. That was not true. I mean, if they were taking courses at one place or another, that was because ... you had to do it. It had nothing to do with the merger, with the fact that we were now, you know, more involved with the state than we had been before. ... As far as I know, it didn't affect us financially, in any way, either.

RA: With more of the men back now, did they have to add classrooms?

HD: Oh, yes, they did. They did that at Rutgers. They started putting classrooms out at ... where the football stadium is now, you know, that campus.

SH: Busch Campus.

HD: The Busch Campus.

SH: They used the old barracks.

HD: Yes, they did, the Quonset huts, and then, later on, when we came back, as married with two kids, we lived on the Busch Campus.

SH: Did you?

HD: Yes, ... in the old huts, with a single furnace, you know, and little, tiny rooms, and that was an interesting year, too.

SH: They were still using that then. What year would that have been?

HD: We came back, let's see, ... it's in the '50s, early '50s, yes, and they used that for quite some time, and then, they finally built the brick graduate student housing ... and faculty housing, [Ford Hall?]. ...

SH: That was really for graduate students, married students. They were all out there.

HD: Yes. ...

RA: During the summer, you got a job with the US Army Quartermaster Corps.

HD: Yes. That was after I graduated and before I went to NJC. So, it was that summer.

RA: It was between high school and NJC.

HD: Yes. ...

RA: What was your role there?

HD: Well, it was not typing. [laughter] It was [that] I sat at a desk and I went through all these requisitions, everything that had to ... be sent overseas, and we were under the Army, you know. I mean, it was working for the Army, in essence, and it was the first time I ever had to clock in in the morning and, you know, [out] in the afternoon, and it was just sitting there. ... It was very boring, quite frankly, and I thought, "I'm so glad I'm going off to college after this."

SH: Where were you doing this, in Jersey City?

HD: Yes, in Jersey City, at the Quartermaster Corps, ... but, I mean, I got a paycheck for the first time in my life, so, that was exciting, and I really didn't make any big friends [there].

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO-----

RA: This continues an interview with Ms. Helen Dauster on Thursday, March 23, 2006, in Skillman, New Jersey, with Ross Abramowitz and Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Side one, tape two.

SH: You were talking about ...

HD: I was just saying, being two months at the Quartermaster Corps and just sitting, doing a boring job, is something that is not imprinted on my memory as one of the significant things in my life. [laughter]

RA: Were there a lot of women that did this with you? It does not seem like you remember much about it.

HD: Yes, they were mostly women, but there were quite a few Army guys, too. I mean, ... Captain Jolly was my boss at that time, and it ... had a lot to do with these requisition forms and checking off what had [been ordered], you know; ... well, anyway. [laughter]

SH: Was there any security involved in any of this?

HD: I don't remember that; ... no, not really, not the kind of security that we think of today, no way.

RA: I just have a couple of questions about activities at NJC. There was something called the Beehive.

HD: Yes, the Beehive was for ... commuters, and that was kind of too bad, in a way, because those are the women that I really didn't get to know, because they are the ones that came and did their classes, and then, would leave and go home again. You would see them, now and then, in the library and they were very nice. There were a couple of black women who were also at NJC at the time and I'm not sure, I didn't think they were allowed to live on campus, and they were just ... commuters. So, there, they did have a place where they could congregate, but they didn't mix that much with the other students.

SH: Could you be married and go to NJC?

HD: I don't think so. ... This is very interesting. There is a woman who lives not too far from me, here at Stonebridge, who was in my class who did get married and she left college at the time. I think there may have been one gal who was married, but this was certainly frowned upon by Dean Boddie, the Dean of Women. [laughter]

SH: How did Dean Boddie take to all of the GIs coming back and being so available now?

HD: Oh, I just think she told the watchman to be more careful than ever, and one of the incidents that we had, at the German House, was that the watchman reported to her that it was eleven-fifteen, or whatever, past the curfew, and there were eleven people in that living room. ... We always wondered who that extra person was, [laughter] because it was mainly, usually, couples that were there. So, it was a little upsetting to Dean Boddie, you know, because, prior to this, prior to the time that I went to college, and I've talked to other women who'd gone to other colleges, that was very [different]. You know, I mean, you did wear white gloves all the time, you did wear skirts and, you know, you didn't do the kind of things [we did]. It was [that] the war was so close to coming to an end at the time that I was there that I think that was that spirit of rebellion, [that it] was rampant on campus. ... You know, once I started going steady with Frank, I mean, we went to all these fraternity parties and there was no curfew there at all. There was a housemother, but, usually, no big curfew, and so, things were a lot looser and that was because of the GIs coming back, absolutely had to do with that.

SH: I have heard that the women that would come to the parties would be allowed to stay, but the men had to leave the fraternity house. Did this happen?

HD: Oh, yes. The men left and we were given beds in the upstairs, in the rooms, and, of course, there, needless to say, there was still some hanky-panky going on during those days, [laughter] and be still my heart, but, on the whole, ... it was a different time. This was before the [birth control] pill, remember. This is very, very important. I'm not sure you want to go into that aspect of it, [laughter] but, really and truly, it is. I mean, the sexual freedom was not there, because getting pregnant was, I mean, that was anathema. That was the worst thing you could possibly do. You know, your mother would die, your father would kill somebody. [laughter] So, women did not have the freedom that they had after the pill, a lot of that. ... There were things going on, but it wasn't the kind of atmosphere and climate that you have today, or that you had later on.

SH: Coming to NJC when Camp Kilmer was still an embarkation point, were there any problems with men who were there waiting to be sent overseas? Were there any incidents of young women not being safe or any of that? Were you worried about anything?

HD: We really didn't have [that], no. ... When we went over to the dances, we would go over in busses and things like that, and they were USO dances and most of the men were very polite and very nice. ... There was no drinking, really, there. There was a lot more drinking in fraternities later on, after the war, a lot of drinking, ... and there was not supposed to be any drinking. [laughter] ... Some of the fraternities did get caught on that and ... they had problems with it. They really did. ... I told you early on that if you signed out for somebody's house and it was one of the students, then, from there on in, you were on your own. So, even if you signed out, and then, went to the prom and were in a fraternity house overnight, ... you know, everything was okay, unless somebody saw women leaving a fraternity house at eight o'clock in the morning and they reported them. Then, there were problems. ...

SH: Really?

HD: Yes, and, of course, at that time, NJC had the honor system, which ... I don't think they have anymore, and that was also a very interesting aspect of NJC. I mean, you were allowed to take tests home, occasionally, ... people were not monitoring the room when ... tests were given, and a lot of the women took this very seriously. They really did, and, when things were brought up, when something went wrong, it's the women's council, the student council, that would take [action].

SH: They were the disciplinarians.

HD: Yes.

SH: Really?

HD: Yes, yes.

SH: As the senior in charge of the house; I cannot remember the title you said.

HD: House chairman.

SH: House chairman; were you in charge of handling discipline?

HD: [Yes].

SH: Did you report it or did you handle it yourself, in-house?

HD: Well, number one, there was very little going on. There were very, very few problems. ... We had freshmen in the house, so, occasionally, there was a little bit of hazing going on and teasing and this kind of thing, but, on the whole, there were no really big, big problems.

SH: You could handle it in-house. You did not have to take it somewhere else.

HD: Yes. Well, there was one situation where somebody wrote a paper and most of it came from a book and that was discovered, and she was there while we were there and she was gotten. I can't remember what they did, what happened to her, but ... She had to leave college. It was a pretty serious thing, any cheating or anything like that, and, yet, I'm sure it probably went on, but there was really a general feeling of, "There is an honor system and, by golly, they're letting us live here without a housemother," ... and we honored that sort of thing. We may be radical, but we honored that. [laughter]

RA: What was the Spa? It was not exactly a spa you would think of today.

HD: Oh, no, no. It was a little luncheonette/soda fountain, and you would go down there when you cut class. You would have three legitimate cuts, ... and, sometimes, you took more than that, and I did become a bridge player at that time. ... I mean, we'd go down there and they'd always have these bridge [games], loads of bridge, you know, everybody sitting there, playing bridge, drinking coffee and smoking. There was a lot of smoking that went on, and so, that was the Spa. People were just [cutting classes]. It was so close to the college that you could just go down, or, you know, during your free periods, you would go down, too, and it was just a little bit of that rebel feeling again, you know. "We are on our own. We are adults, we are no longer kids. We're no longer home with our parents. We can do what we want to do." [laughter]

SH: What about physical education? Was that a requirement?

HD: Yes, it was, it was, but one of the wonderful things was that they'd let you go horseback riding. So, that's one of the things that I did. [laughter] I took horseback riding. That was not on campus. We had to go, I don't know, [to] Middletown, some place down around here, and that was kind of fun. We had basketball and hockey, outdoor hockey, and that was required and you just went, and, you know, you did it and it was fun.

SH: Were you involved in any of the other activities that would have taken you to other campuses? I know you went to summer school in Maine, but were there any intercollegiate competitions?

HD: ... No, no, nothing, nothing like that, no.

SH: Debates?

HD: No. That's the sort of thing that came later.

RA: Later, when you settled down, you said that you had two sons. Would you like to tell us about your sons and what they did?

HD: Sure. [laughter] Two sons; I thought I was going to have a son and a daughter, because everybody was doing that. [laughter] I mean, that's the thing to do. You have a son and you have a daughter. I had two sons and it's been very interesting, and I think of my sons now as my friends. They're very special and we kind of brought them up to have some of our values, and they certainly have, which ... makes us feel very good, but they came by them themselves. ... It wasn't something that we drilled into them, but Bob, he's the older one, he went to Wesleyan. He decided that's where he wanted to go, and then, ... he left and he went to California and he decided that he wasn't sure if he really wanted to major in archeology, which was his major, or anthropology, and he'd heard that Rutgers had a program here with a master's. He came back, got a master's here, and then, he got a fellowship, a really nice fellowship, to Yale. ... That was a bit of a problem, because that was in geology and ... that was when, during the Carter years, ... the oil market went down, and he also had a problem with his [dissertation]. He has everything but the PhD degree in geology, and then, he decided to try the world of finance, which he did for a number of years, and he got married, in the interim, to a wonderful gal who's a lawyer, by the way, now. ... Then, they both decided that what he ought to do ... is go into teaching. So, he ... left the finance world and he did this alternate way of going into teaching and that was about a two-year thing, with no income coming [in], except her income, and, now, he's teaching earth sciences, the geology, in high school, and he loves teaching. He absolutely loves it, and so, that's one thing. He said, "I know what I'm doing now. You know, when I was in the finance world, I just didn't feel this was [right], you know, 'What am I doing?' I come home from work every day and say, 'What is this?'" you know, ... although he's still very interested in finances [laughter] and he's doing that for the family, but he's much more science-oriented. Nick, the younger one, was very unsure of himself as a high school student, and then, he decided to go to Dickinson College, in Pennsylvania, for two years, and I think we influenced him to do that. We thought this was a small school and it would be good for him. However, he wanted to major in English and, I guess it was religion, at the time, and it turns out Rutgers had much better departments in both those areas. So, he transferred to Rutgers for his junior and senior year, and then, he went down to Texas, got a fellowship there. Before that, he worked in Mexico, teaching English, living ... with a Mexican family, and so, he's very good, his Spanish is quite good. ... Then, he worked as a speechwriter for a guy who was running for Governor of Texas, ... was Governor, but, then, he lost an election, but Nick had been a speechwriter for him, gotten very interested in that. He loves writing. He was writing movie reviews, ... when he was down in Texas then, for the paper at the University of Texas. ... Then, he started working for a guy who became a US

Representative. Representative Frank Tejada was a very interesting man, and ... Nick was his aide. ... He was in the House for, I think it was less than a year and he died of a brain tumor, and it was really such a shock to Nick. [Editor's Note: Representative Tejada passed away in 1997, shortly after his third term in the US House of Representatives began.] ... He'd been Nick's mentor, and so, Nick wound up working where he is now, the Department of Health and Human Services in Texas, and he feels that he is giving back in that way. ... When he worked for Tejada, he really did; he said, "I set up a bill where there were parts of Texas really close to the Mexican border where they had no water and we've worked on that and we got it." You know, he's a good guy. He really is. [laughter] So, we're pleased, and we do have two grandsons and we have one who is at Vassar, who is interested in economics and poli sci, and the other one is a senior now, going to Skidmore, and is very interested in politics. [laughter] So, he's sort of my son, Nick, reborn, you know. [laughter] He wrote a most amazing essay and he got early decision to Skidmore. So, he's one of these kids who doesn't have to worry about where he's going to be going in September. He's just sitting on top of the world, but he thinks there's so many [things] wrong with the world, you know. [laughter] ... I love them both dearly. ...

SH: When did you go back to Rutgers to get your master's?

HD: Oh, yes, I did that, didn't I? [laughter] Well, we had the two kids and we had not too much money, even coming back to Rutgers, and, in those days, the professors weren't getting very much money and I thought, "Oh, I ought to do something to make some money." So, I thought, "What do I know how to do?" Well, I was teaching, so, obviously, I could get a job substituting. Well, I walked in, to substitute, and I remember, it's the sixth grade, and the sixth graders are down the hall and I hear one of them saying, "Here she comes, and she looks easy," you know, [laughter] and I came home that day and I said, "You two boys are so great. You're such wonderful kids," you know. ... I thought, "That's one thing I really [did right]," and I did some more substituting, but, oh, boy, talk about thankless jobs, I mean, you know, really rough. So, then, Frank was at Rutgers at the time and he would go into the library and he would talk to the cataloguer, Mrs. (Merritt?), and he would say, "I need those books. Why aren't those books catalogued I ordered?" That's Frank, you know, and so, she said, "Does your wife know any foreign languages? [laughter] Send her in to me." So, I went in and I worked part-time and I was cataloguing in German, and then, she had me cataloguing in Spanish. I knew a little of that, and I knew some French and Russian, I was just transliterating, you know, and then, Hebrew. I had a girl sitting next to me who would tell me, "Go in the back of the book," and how to do it, and that was an interesting part of my life. It really was. Mrs. (Merritt?) was a strange but wonderful woman, and she decided that I should be doing; I was not doing cataloguing. I was doing what they called "descriptive cataloguing," which is [where] you're working with a cataloguer, and she said, "Why don't you take a course in cataloguing?" So, I said, "Hmm," and ... she'd pulled me into the room and she said, "Here, you talk to the Dean of the Library School ... and say you want to take a course." So, I started taking courses in cataloguing and reference, and, pretty soon, I had amassed enough credits and they said, "You'd better start matriculating," because I hadn't matriculated then. So, that was good, because I didn't have to take any Graduate Record Exam. I had already taken all these courses. [laughter] So, it went on and I got my master's in library service, and, when you get a master's, at that time, you could work in any library. It could have been a commercial library, it could have been a high school [library], college, whatever, because all your courses were geared toward that, but I did take children's

literature, which was one of the possibilities, and young people's literature. So, when a job opened up for a school librarian, there I was. Not only did I do that, but I'd had three years of teaching, which they immediately gave me credit for, and I had my master's, which is more than most of the librarians had. They were teacher librarians, and so, I had all ... this good stuff that I might just as well go on [with], and so, I became a school librarian, and then, later on, a media specialist, when we changed the name to media specialist, [laughter] and I did that for twenty, twenty-two years.

SH: Did you teach in the same school district or school?

HD: I did. ... My children were out of the school; they were in junior high by the time I was a ... librarian in their [school]. It was in the same school system, but in their particular school where they had gone, Randolphville School. ... They were not there while I was there, and so, that was very interesting. I enjoyed that. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed telling stories, I enjoyed reading stories, and there were a lot of things I didn't enjoy about it, but I loved working with the kids. I really did, at that point.

SH: I do not think you would have fit the typical librarian mold because of your animation. I have to tell you that most people have a more negative opinion of a librarian, for the most part.

HD: Well, ... again, a little bit of the radical came out with me, and I never told the kids, which some of the librarians did, they said, "You have not returned my book. You have to return my books to the library," and I had some really good teachers, professors, at Rutgers. I really did. I had professors who said, "If a sex book is gone from the library and somebody has taken it, maybe that person needed that kind of help and that was a book that you chose and that was good information. So, just go and buy another book," [laughter] and that was my feeling about a lot of things. I mean, I didn't say, and I told the kids, "This is not my library; it's your library, and, please, if you return a book, that's terrific, because, then, somebody else can take that book out. So, please return that book." [laughter] So, you know, a lot my psychology courses that I took at Rutgers stood me in very good stead, because I never said to a kid, "You are bad. You have done something bad." I just said, "That book is on the floor. Books are not meant to be on the floor, so, please, pick it up," you know, and if you use this kind of psychology and you're not saying to them, "You are bad," [instead, you would say], "What you have done is wrong," and, you know, it helps. So, anyway, I used this psychology here. You know, I've started this library here.

SH: Did you?

HD: Yes, [laughter] and I just had a wonderful incident, which has nothing to do with what you're asking. ...

SH: Oh, but we are asking about you.

HD: Now, but I helped set this library up and I'm the chairperson of this library, and we have a young man here who is our [retirement community] CEO and we have to let him know everything that's going on, and one thing we wanted was a computer in the library. Now, we

can't plug in to the system here. There is a system and ... we didn't want that. We just wanted it so [that] we could have our collection on the computer, but ... we had a meeting of some of the librarians here and the chair, and they said, "What are you going to do?" and I said, "Okay, what we're going to do is, we're going to put the computer in the library, set it up, and then, we're going to have David come up," which I did yesterday, and I was telling him about everything that was going on. Frank, are you listening to this? [laughter]

FD: What?

HD: Never mind. "Of all the things that we'd done, you know, new magazine rack, we have this," and he said, "I see you have a computer," and I said, "Yes, isn't that great?" [laughter] and he said, "Yes." ... You know, if we had asked him, "Could we have a computer in the library?" he probably would have said, "Well, I have to go to Presbyterian Homes and ask," da-dah, da-dah, da-dah, but it's done. He's not going to ask me to take it out, [laughter] and he just kept saying, "Hey, you're doing a great job."

Frank Dauster: You're describing my married life. [laughter]

HD: Oh, honey. You see, we've been talking my head off here. ...

SH: She said her psychology courses held her in good stead. [laughter]

FD: That's where I made my mistake, letting her get mixed up with those psychology [courses]. [laughter]

HD: And so, anyway.

SH: Did you ever get involved with the unions or any of that?

HD: That was when ... I was a school librarian in Randolphville School, because, at that point, we went out on strike and that was really a tough time, to strike or not to strike, and I did. I did not go to work. I didn't strike because I wasn't feeling well. I had a dental problem I had, [laughter] but I did, I guess, walk, "walk the walk." ... It was for salaries and class sizes and all that sort of thing, and we did win, ... but I couldn't be a scab. [laughter] ...

SH: What are some of the passions that you have had? Did you have a favorite professor that influenced something that you are doing now or you did later?

HD: Well, I think my first history professor was just wonderful, because we were not talking about history as dates and things, that, you know, I mean, this is the sort of thing we did in high school, but just waves, how one thing influences another. ... I mean, it was the history of Western Civilization and he was really good at what he did, and I just ... got so excited about that, and I still am, to a certain extent. ... My other passion is art, and after I stopped; let's see, when was that, when was that? Oh, when I retired, I started going back to Rutgers [laughter] and taking art history courses, and had some wonderful professors there, too, and then, ... I loved to do my own artwork. I do a little bit of that.

SH: What do you do? What is your focus?

HD: Watercolor, mainly, ... that and the library, and Frank teaches at RU-ALL and I'm on the council there and the head of the curriculum committee there now. So, I'm busy. [laughter]

SH: This is the ...

HD: Rutgers University Academy of Lifelong Learning, [now the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers University], and this is, hey, that's a coming thing. I was just reading in a magazine that the third part of one's life, you know, after being a kid and after doing your work, ... a lot of people retire in their sixties, and then, where do you go from there? Well, you don't go home anymore and sit and just knit and rock in your rocking chair. You give back, if you want to, if you're up to it, and I feel that very strongly. I really do. ... There's a lot of giving back that you can do in this community, a lot. ... I happen to be one of the little bit younger people that's here, and so that I can do a little shopping, as I did for my neighbor, who's having a little problem, or go buy a flower for somebody who's up in the skilled nursing who fell off a chair, because she was hiding cookies from her husband and she was getting up to get her [a cookie] herself. [laughter] It's very sad, because she broke a couple of ribs and she's kind of [injured], but, when he told us that story, we said, "Jim, my God," you know. [laughter] ... So, I bought stools for the library that no one can get up on. You know, one of the ladies, the other day, said, "Can I stand on one of those stools?" I said, "Don't you dare. ... You're out of my library then." [laughter] I don't work out there all the time. That library is open twenty-four hours a day. We have it set up so that people can go in, if they can't sleep at night, they can go in the library. It's all donations and it's all catalogued and the donations are fabulous. People who live in this retirement residence Stonebridge have chosen it because it's between Princeton and Rutgers and there's a lot of things going on. So, that's the third part of your life, and [becomes] your life when you get to it, [laughter] and it's good. ...

SH: Is there anything that we have not asked you that you would like to add?

HD: I hope not. [laughter]

SH: Do you have any more questions?

RA: I am good.

SH: All right. Thank you so much. This has been a delightful, delightful afternoon.

HD: Well, it's been a lot of fun, too. [laughter] I've been going back in my life and, you know, I don't do that that often. I really don't. I mean, a lot of people do, and I've been thinking of keeping a journal, which I do sporadically, here, and I think all those things are important, but I've never been one to dwell on the past, and I don't know.

SH: Thank you, because you have educated us. I will not give Ross a test at this point, but I would be willing to bet that there is a tremendous amount that he has learned today about different things that could only be learned through something like this. I thank you.

HD: Well, I thank you for coming and ... I never thought I would do this. I really didn't. You know, you sent me that thing [pre-interview survey] and it took me a long [time], [laughter] and I told Ross that I mislaid it. ... See, I am not a typical librarian, [laughter] but I loved being a librarian, and I still am.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Ross Abramowitz 4/29/06
Reviewed by Priscilla Fasoro 11/18/08
Reviewed by Courtney Haines 2/18/09
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 9/4/09
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 9/5/09
Reviewed by Helen Dauster 10/30/09