

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DONALD J. TAYLOR

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

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and

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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David Fulvio: This begins an interview with Dr. Donald J. Taylor on Friday, November 2, 2007, with David Fulvio and Sandra Holyoak. First, we would like to thank you, Dr. Taylor, for volunteering your time for this interview. Your help is greatly appreciated. To start, could we discuss your father? Where did he grow up?

Donald Taylor: My father's name was John Ogden Taylor. He grew up in New York State.

DF: Where in New York State?

DT: He was born in Norwich, New York.

DF: Were his parents immigrants, or how long had the family been in the United States?

DT: Actually, I have, in my home, a Civil War discharge paper for John Taylor, who was in the Union Army and he immigrated from Canada, and that John Taylor was my father's father's father, so, was my great-grandfather.

DF: Your father attended college.

DT: He went to Syracuse University and graduated in 1928.

DF: What did he study?

DT: He was in premed, I believe. I'm not sure.

DF: Ultimately, what did his career ended up being in?

DT: He worked in mid-level, low-level management, mostly for the Aluminum Company of America, Alcoa.

DF: Was he in a union?

DT: No.

DF: Okay. How about your mother? Where did she grow up?

DT: My mother grew up in Brooklyn, New York.

DF: She attended college as well.

DT: She also went to Syracuse, and also graduated in 1928.

DF: I assume that was how they met.

DT: That's how they met. [laughter]

DF: How long were they together before they got married?

DT: I don't know what the date of their marriage was. I was born in 1936, so, I'd guess in [the] very late '20s, early 1930s.

DF: What did she study?

DT: She was in fine arts. She was an artist.

DF: Okay. Did she have an occupation as well?

DT: No. She was generally at home, but she did do some painting, some commercial art, and enjoyed that. She was a very good artist.

DF: Her specialty was painting.

DT: Painting, yes.

DF: During the 1930s, the Great Depression, did your parents struggle financially or were they more at ease than other families, perhaps?

DT: [laughter] I'm chuckling because they began very well, because they were college graduates, which was rare back then. Up through the '30s and ... early 1940s, they were well-off and, from that point on, it was downhill. My father was never able to progress in a job very well and they never had a lot of money, but, for about four or five years, they were doing great, but, then, the war came and things changed.

SH: That is amazing, because, usually, we hear of people who started to do better with the war's growth. That is quite interesting to hear that that spiraled the other way for them. Were your mother and father politically involved? What was their background?

DT: They weren't involved politically. They were both Republicans, as far as I can recall. They had good conversations with friends and relatives about politics and I always had a half an ear tuned toward them, but, no, they weren't involved in a local political party of any sort.

SH: What about the church? Was that important for them?

DT: They were both Episcopalians, as I was and am. They did what many parents did back in those days--that was to encourage my going to church, which I did dutifully until I got to high school and college, and then, I took some time off. Then, I went back. [laughter]

SH: Do you have siblings?

DT: ... No, I'm an only child, which was not that unusual for my generation, during the Depression. Depression babies were fewer, which made it very easy for my generation. I don't know if you got the same kind of comment from my peers, but those of us who were born in the

'30s, there weren't that many of us, so, it was easy to be involved in organizations. It was never a problem in classes, because there was plenty of room. It wasn't until the Baby Boomers came along and, all of a sudden, you began to really worry about getting into clubs, getting into schools, getting into almost anything.

SH: You commented earlier on how rare it was in that day and age for a woman to go to college. Did your mother ever talk about that, or about how she was encouraged to go to college?

DT: My mother had one sibling, my aunt, and their father was a furrier in Brooklyn and, apparently, enormously successful. They had tons of money and, when you had a lot of money in Brooklyn in the 1920s, you sent your daughters or sons to college. So, that's why they wound up in college. I'm convinced that life is at least fifty percent luck [laughter] and they happened to be born to a family that had a lot of money and that was what you did.

SH: That answers the question, because it is something that we hear over and over again. You rarely hear of any working-class families who sent their daughters to college, or at least to a school like Syracuse.

DT: Sure.

SH: They might go to business school or something like that, for employment, but that was it.

DT: My father came from a poorer family, but he was a terrific athlete and he went on a football scholarship, of all things. They even had football scholarships back in the '20s and that's how he got to college.

SH: Did he ever think of pursuing a career in football? Was that something he wanted to do, or coaching?

DT: No, I'm not too sure he was that good. He was good, good enough to play for four years. He was proud of playing football and lacrosse, but I think he figured, "I've been there, done that and I want to do something else, want to go out and make some money." There weren't the opportunities in professional sports back in the '20s that there are today. So, ... typically, if you went to college and played a sport, you did it for the joy of playing that sport, not because, once you graduated, you may make a couple of million dollars a year, because you can do something that people want to watch.

DF: Do you know what position he played?

DT: He was a lineman. He was big. He was, oh, about six-[foot]-two, two hundred-and-some-odd pounds, which, again, back in those days, attracted the attention of the Syracuse football staff, said, "Here's a big kid from a New York State farming community. Let's have him play line for us." [laughter]

DF: Where were you raised? Were you raised in Upstate New York as well?

DT: I was born in Brooklyn and we moved from Brooklyn when I was three or four years old to New Jersey and we lived in New Jersey until about 1940. ... My father, who was then working for Westmore Cosmetics, was transferred to Dallas, Texas. So, we moved to Dallas for a couple of years, until the war came. Then, we moved back to New Jersey.

SH: Whereabouts in New Jersey?

DT: In Bergen County, Harrington Park. I spent my elementary school and high school career while living in Harrington Park, New Jersey, which is a small, probably now affluent, town in the middle of Bergen County.

DF: I know you were only six years old, but do you have any memories of Pearl Harbor or the announcement of the attack?

DT: As a matter-of-fact, I do. I'm not sure it's all my memory. It might be part of my parents retelling the story, but we lived in an apartment in Dallas, Texas, a redbrick apartment. I was playing outside--like, 1941, I was, what? ... five years old, and my mother yelled from the window, "Come in the house, quickly," because she had just heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor. They didn't know, we didn't know, "Does that mean the Japanese are on the way to bomb Dallas, Texas?" So, I got into the house and I stayed there until my mother and father realized that it was far away, that the threat of an invasion was not imminent, and that was my memory of Pearl Harbor.

SH: That is great. That is the first time I have heard that someone actually brought their children in.

DT: Yes.

DF: Did you have any family members who fought in World War II?

DT: No.

DF: Did any family members take part in the war effort at home, that you know of?

DT: My father worked for Alcoa, the Aluminum Company of America, and, during the war, partly out of patriotism and partly out of the chance to make more money, ... he got a job in the evening to help the war effort, which was not unusual. Many acquaintances from Harrington Park [did so]. I remember, for example, the elementary school janitor worked as a school janitor, but he took a part-time job in a nearby town, making plastic water distillers for pilots who were shot down over the water, mainly in the Pacific. ... They could set up this contraption and take sea water and it would distill it. I know that because we had a school trip, because the school janitor was able to arrange that. ... Let's see, 1945, have to back up a little bit, maybe third or fourth grade, we went there and we saw them actually making these things. [I] didn't understand it, but I recall the school trip and I recall the concept of, "Here is one of our school staff working part-time to help the war effort by making these distilling things," not too sure they would work very well, but it was a good effort. [laughter]

SH: The idea was good. Did your family participate in the bond drives? Did you ever hear them talk about that? I know, in school, some of the students collected money for different things.

DT: Yes--thanks for the prompting. I remember buying stamps. You could buy a war bond, but for those of us, particularly kids, who didn't have the money to buy a war bond, you could go to a post office and buy a war stamp. ... [With] so many war stamps, after ten, fifteen, whatever the number of dollars was, you could trade in your book of stamps to get a war bond--a rather ingenious way of getting money to help the war effort and, also, to help those who didn't have the resources to buy a war bond, but could maybe buy a ten-cent stamp once a week and work on it that way.

SH: Did you keep any of that memorabilia?

DT: Sadly, no. My mother, I think, kept a lot of memorabilia, but I, at the time, never had an interest in keeping it and probably threw it away. There wasn't even recycling back in those days, so, unfortunately, no, no memorabilia.

SH: Just curious. [laughter]

DF: Prior to your time at Rutgers, would you have classified yourself as a good student in high school?

DT: I was a good student in high school. I had a lot of fun in college. It actually took me four-and-a-half years to graduate from Rutgers. I began in engineering and realized that I could not have a lot of fun and be in engineering. So, I transferred to economics.

DF: Did you take part in any sports or extracurricular activities while in high school?

DT: While in high school, a handful of clubs, no sports. I lived in Harrington Park, which was a commuter town, a feeder town, to Dumont High School, where I graduated. Harrington Park would buy train tickets for its high school students and, for the first two years, I went to high school on a train pulled by a steam engine. Then, they converted, sadly, to a diesel engine, wasn't nearly as glamorous, but, for four years, all of us who lived in Harrington Park would gather down at the train station around eight o'clock in the morning, take a train a couple of stops to Dumont, walk from the Dumont train station to high school and back again. ... That's how I went to high school, as did many others who lived nearby the [towns with] high schools, because there were fewer high schools then, or small towns, obviously, [that] couldn't afford a high school would send [students over], as they probably do to regional high schools even today.

SH: What year did you graduate from Dumont?

DT: 1954.

SH: What were you hearing about the buildup of the Cold War and the Korean Conflict? Was there anything in the school curriculum?

DT: Surprisingly little. I just began to read David Halberstam's *The Longest Winter [The Coldest Winter (2007)]*. I love his stuff anyway. He wrote a book about the Korean War that I'm enjoying. The Forgotten War--I hope you have a chance to do oral interviews of Korean War vets--but it was, surprisingly, a non-issue, at least in my family, amongst my friends' families, acquaintances. We knew it was going on. The only way to learn about the Korean War was through print media, through the newspapers, and the radio. Television was just in its infancy and not much going on there.

SH: Your father was still working for Alcoa then.

DT: Yes, yes. He worked for Alcoa pretty much the rest of his life, until he retired.

SH: Did you do any traveling as a young man?

DT: No, because we were poor, relatively poor. We didn't have a car until about the early 1950s, because, when we were in Dallas, Texas, the war began. My mother called her sister Tess, my Aunt Tess, in Brooklyn, and said, "We're coming back," because my father has a job with Alcoa in New Jersey, and my aunt said, "Sell your car. There's no gasoline. Whatever you do, sell the car, come by train." So, of course, we sold our car, came by train, only to realize that there were people still driving in New Jersey, [laughter] and we couldn't buy a car, because it was the wartime. ... Then, we couldn't afford to buy a car until, oh, the early 1950s.

DF: With your parents being Republican, were they strong supporters of Eisenhower?

DT: Probably. We didn't talk about politics that much--at least they didn't talk about politics with me. I might pick up a conversation on the dinner table, but that was about it.

SH: What was the primary conversation around the dinner table in the early 1950s?

DT: That's a good question. Because it was just my mother and father and me, the opportunities for conversations were kind of like, maybe, "How did school go today?" or some very light, inconsequential conversations. Where we did have better conversations was during family holidays, where we'd get together, typically with my aunt and uncle and their two kids, and then, the conversations were vigorous, wide-ranging, mostly politics, anything that came along, but we needed a critical mass, I think. ... Because of the small family, we didn't have that.

SH: Where did your Aunt Tess live?

DT: Brooklyn.

SH: She lived in Brooklyn.

DT: Right.

SH: Would you travel there?

DT: Went there several times a year, by bus, a couple of subway stops, but, again, that was fairly common then. Even those folks who, in Harrington Park, my friends, all had cars, you couldn't drive very much because of gas rationing and the public transportation was very good. There were three bus lines, even in a small town like Harrington Park. There was a mainline railroad. Almost all of those who commuted to New York City from Harrington Park rode the train. There was train after train after train, every ten minutes, with fifty, sixty, seventy men, always men, very few women, going to New York City to work, and that's how you did it back in the '50s.

SH: What do you remember as being the hot topics as a kid in high school? What was going on in New Jersey?

DT: I lived a very ideal life growing up. Even though we didn't have a lot of money, those were the times where you could play outside all day without fear of anything, where you could go swimming in the local river, where you'd ride your bikes all day. ... Somehow, we spent the entire summer happily doing nothing, playing, [laughter] and it was a very, very easy life. Even with the war on, it was a great time to be a kid.

DF: Did you have any hobbies or particular interests?

DT: Not really. I was kind of interested in scientific stuff, but not in a serious way. A lot of good friends--when you live in a small town and go through all eight elementary school grades with the same kids, you develop some real strong friendships--and we'd just, today's expression, you hang out together. ... We seemed to do that hour after hour, accomplishing absolutely nothing, but enjoying every minute of it. [laughter]

SH: Were you involved in anything like the Boy Scouts?

DT: Cub Scouts, briefly.

SH: Were there things like swimming lessons or any kind of sports teams that you did?

DT: No, not that I did. There were very few opportunities for sports in the '50s. High schools tended to have football for boys, basketball for boys, track and baseball for boys. Girls weren't allowed to play sports back then. So, unless you were a pretty decent athlete, even in a small high school, you didn't play, because there weren't that many things to do.

SH: Was music important?

DT: Good question. My Aunt Tess was an accomplished musician. She graduated from Syracuse--trying to backtrack--probably six years before my mother and she majored in music and she was, for a brief period of time, a professional pianist. In fact, she was in one or two of the very first talking pictures, because she was a beautiful woman and she was classically

trained. So, they would have a movie of my Aunt Tess playing the piano, which was big stuff back in the late '20s, because that's when sound first came on the scene. ... Because she loved music, it kind of transferred to my mother and the radio was always tuned to the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts on Saturday afternoons, any chance to hear music. In those days, music, classical music, was often on radio and, occasionally, on TV. So, yes, it was a musical background that I grew up in--good stuff.

SH: What about the library? You talked about reading now.

DT: There wasn't a library in Harrington Park. My mother was an avid reader and, in those days, they had book rentals at local five-and-dimes, ice cream stores, where you would go down, you would walk a couple of blocks, to a confectionary and there would be a bookcase, with maybe fifty, sixty books, and, for five cents a week, you could rent these books and take them home and read them. ... That's how at least those who read in Harrington Park, and I suspect surrounding towns, were reading back then, no public libraries. I'm sure there were in the larger towns, but nothing in Harrington Park. So, you rented a book for a nickel a week or a nickel for three days, whatever it was.

SH: Great stuff. [laughter] Are there any other things that you can think of that are no longer practiced or in existence now? You grew up through a period in our history where things changed so quickly.

DT: Nothing specific. I might think of something later on, but, ... again, when you think back, you tend to remember the good stuff and you tend to cancel out all the bad stuff, although, probably, was very little bad stuff.

SH: What was a typical Saturday afternoon like? You talked about hanging out. Did you go to the movies? Was there a movie theater in Harrington Park?

DT: We would occasionally go to the movies, by bus, and that was a treat, but, for, you know, fifty cents, you can go to the movies and buy popcorn and snacks. We would sometimes hitchhike to save the bus fare that our parents gave us, so [that] we could even ... buy more stuff at the movies, sure, [laughter] ... on Saturdays, as I got older. ... An example of how things have changed--when I was in high school, age fourteen through, what, eighteen? every New Year's Eve, I would go with a couple of friends to Times Square, New York, by ourselves, with full permission of our parents. We'd go to a movie, we would eat, celebrate New Year's Eve in Times Square. Now, here are a bunch of fourteen, fifteen, sixteen-year-old kids doing this--hop the bus and come back home. You can't do that today. So, when I say it was a simpler, easier, gentle life, and maybe those of my peer group will say the same thing, it was very easy to live, at least in that particular part of the world, in the 1940s and 1950s.

SH: You talked about the class trip, that you remember going to see the manufacturing of those water distillers for the war effort.

DT: Right.

SH: What other kinds of school trips would someone take from Bergen County? Would you go into New York? Would you go to a farm?

DT: Good question. We didn't take school trips; I suspect part of it because of the war. We had, in our grammar school--again, I'm going from about '42 to 1950--we had two kinds of media. We had an old-fashioned slide projector, which was huge, as big as a half of a file cabinet, with an old-fashioned, thick glass slide, which probably had been around for fifty years. That was a special treat. Maybe once or twice a month, we got to see slides and, a couple of times a week, we would have rolled in an old-fashioned phonograph, the old seventy-eight, and listen to music, and that was pretty much the excitement for elementary school back in those days. [laughter]

SH: Were there any sports teams that you followed as a high school student?

DT: My father, having been an athlete in college, was an avid sports spectator, would listen to, on the radio, and, eventually, TV, baseball games, occasionally football games, but, back in those days, there wasn't the huge, dramatic attention to sports as there is today. That, you might pick up a ballgame on the radio, and, in those days, my mother liked the Brooklyn Dodgers, my father liked the New York Giants. When they had an away game, they, the announcers, would get the results by tickertape and very clever announcers would be able to make up the game. They would be getting, on a little tape coming across their desk, you know, "Ball one. Strike one," just the bare information, and the good announcers--and the New York teams tended to have good announcers--would develop these completely fictitious scenarios, so that listening to it, about, "Well, he swung hard at that one." He had no idea he swung hard at that one, [laughter] but it was a way of getting the information from the away game, because they didn't have the technology--if they did, it wasn't available--to do it live. So, that, radio, was a very big part of our growing up, I think, in the '40s and '50s. Radio, it was our entertainment.

DF: Did you ever go to the ballpark with your father?

DT: No.

SH: What about a hero? Who would have been your hero?

DT: Good question. I'm not sure I had a hero back then. I don't [recall], at least in my recollection, certainly not sports heroes, the way they're around today. I think, during the war, those in our town who fought were heroes. I remember, the mayor of Harrington Park, name was Jay Walters, was a World War I veteran and his face was pockmarked because of getting gassed in World War I, and he was kind of a local hero. Everybody loved and admired him, because he was a real World War I veteran, but, outside of that, no, no real heroes.

SH: Okay, no heroes, fictitious or otherwise. [laughter]

DT: No.

SH: Okay.

DF: What made you decide to attend Rutgers?

SH: I am going to back it up before you answer that question.

DT: Okay.

SH: Tell us about the encouragement that you either got or did not get in high school to go to college.

DT: Yes. I think I was, again, very lucky, because both my parents went to college and they encouraged it, without being overly demanding. I was a good student, only child, so, that tended to help in terms of having plenty of time to do homework, and I think it was almost always expected I would go to college. ... I remember, when I was a junior in high school, I applied to Rutgers and to Lehigh, and I think to Stevens. At that point, I wanted to be an engineer--at least I thought I did. My father wanted me to be an engineer. Then, I went to something called Boys State. Boys State, I think, probably still exists, was a program for high school juniors sponsored by the American Legion, where you would, at that time, go to Rutgers and have this marvelous week of a thousand-plus other high school juniors from all the high schools in the state, and that's what convinced me to come to Rutgers. When I set foot on the campus, between my junior and senior year, on the Rutgers Campus, I said, "This is where I want to be," and I applied, was fortunate enough to be admitted, got a small scholarship, which we needed, and there I went.

SH: I need you to do a little bit of what you may call bragging, but I do not think it would be--talk about how you were chosen from your high school to do Boys State.

DT: I think because I had good grades and I was active in stuff that appealed to the American Legion. I was involved. I was president of a teenage hospital auxiliary, [that] kind of thing. I kind of liked doing that and, because I looked like a fellow who wouldn't embarrass them in [the] Harrington Park American Legion, they said, "Okay, you're it," and had a great experience, good experience.

SH: Still remaining humble here. [laughter] Were you involved in student government at all?

DT: No, not in high school.

SH: Did you run for any office when you came to Boys State?

DT: No, I was kind of overwhelmed. I was the kid from a small town, from a small high school, and that was a pretty high-powered group. That was, allegedly, the best of the high schools throughout New Jersey and I said, "Wow." So, I kind of sat back and just enjoyed the experience.

SH: You forgot that you had to be of that same ilk to get there. [laughter]

DT: Well, it was from a very small pool. ... [laughter]

SH: When you came to campus, did they show you around? Were you housed in a certain area?

DT: We were housed in Demarest Hall. I think we were all housed in Demarest Hall and the Quad, ate in what was then the Commons--Records Hall, I guess. Is it still called Records Hall? It was then the Commons, and it was just an amazing experience for a seventeen-year-old kid to see a thousand kids in their white Boys State shirts and these gods, the leaders, up on the podium, you know, directing things and just worked out well. ... That's what encouraged me to say, "I want to come back here and go to school."

SH: You came here as a Boys Stater, but did you then come back for an interview or do anything else before you came to Rutgers as a freshman?

DT: No, filled out the application, you took the SATs. My rank in class was decent enough, as were my test scores, and I was admitted.

SH: Did your parents agree that Rutgers was an okay place to go?

DT: Yes, yes.

DF: You were privileged to have parents who influenced you to go to college. Did many of your high school classmates go to college as well? Was that common?

DT: Good question. I'm not sure it was a large portion of my high school classmates who went to college. Remember, I was from a small town that fed a high school from a much bigger town, with other feeder schools, so, I never was part of the larger high school population. They would stay there after school--they could walk home. I, and maybe fifteen to twenty of my Harrington Park classmates, would hop on the train and come back. So, in that respect, I never really became involved in the high school. I had a very good friend, still have a very, very close friend, from Dumont High School. We still stay in touch, but that was the exception. It was just the way the logistics worked back in those days. Again, we didn't have a car. Once you came home, to Harrington Park, you were there until the train came by the next morning. ... All of us who were commuting, who were feeder schools to Dumont High School, I think, we didn't feel isolated--we felt fine, we enjoyed the high school, a lot of good friends there--but it wasn't the same kind of dynamic where you knew where they were going and could get involved in a lot of the activities.

SH: Did any of your Harrington Park friends go to college?

DT: I don't remember. I think so, but, once I got to college, ... once I graduated from high school, my parents moved, for a couple of years, to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. So, I completely lost touch with my Harrington Park friends, and then, I got very involved with my Rutgers friends and pretty much forgot about Harrington Park.

SH: When you came to Rutgers as a freshman in 1954, did you come from Harrington Park?

DT: I came from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, by train, to the train station down here, took a taxi to the Rutgers Campus. I had no idea [where] the Rutgers Campus was, made a taxi driver very happy, probably made a lot of money on this freshman [who] didn't know where the campus [was]. "Well, I'll take you, son. Come on, hop in the car." [laughter]

SH: He did not just drive you up the block.

DT: No, he didn't, yes.

SH: Where were you housed?

DT: Demarest Hall, third floor, corner room.

SH: Who were your roommates?

DT: Bill Toth, from Carteret, and Roy Varco, don't know where he was from, good guys. Neither made it past their freshman year, but, then, in those days, fraternities were a very powerful influence, part of the Rutgers Campus, and I was able to get into the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, which then was a very good fraternity, and that became my life here. Your life then was the fraternity, then, ROTC, and those were my main contacts throughout my four years at Rutgers, four-and-a-half years at Rutgers.

SH: When you came to Rutgers, you were aware that ROTC was mandatory for the first two years.

DT: Yes, and those were great years, because every freshman, every sophomore, with the exception of the veterans on the campus, would dress in blue or khaki and we would have a drill in the afternoon, a thousand, thousands of [students], oh, maybe about twelve, thirteen hundred, young men in ROTC. ... I loved it and I kept on going.

SH: Did you do Army or Air Force?

DT: Air Force.

SH: Air Force ROTC. Why did you pick the Air Force?

DT: It seemed to be a more glamorous profession. I thought I might want to fly. I just liked the whole concept of being in the Air Force. We thought we were better. [laughter] I'm sure we weren't, but we thought we were.

DF: Had you ever been in a plane before you made that decision?

DT: No, [laughter] but I still love to fly, even today. I love to fly, any kind of a plane.

DF: What was the size of the student body overall?

DT: Our entering class, I think, was 750 and we graduated around 450.

SH: You talked about the veterans coming back from Korea when you got here. How involved were they with the campus? What kind of a presence were they?

DT: They were a significant influence in our fraternities, because our fraternities, back then, had housemothers, we wore jackets and ties, ate supper by candlelight, with tablecloths, and the housemothers and the veterans kept things under control. We would look ridiculous to today's college students. We rarely used bad language, we were polite, we thought we were sophisticated, but the veterans were a stabilizing influence, not only in fraternities, but certainly in the classroom, because they were back--they wanted to learn. They didn't want to play college pranks. They wanted to be able to get through their classes as quickly as possible and get to work. So, they were a great leavening for those of us who were in college in the early '50s, typically Korean War vets.

SH: Can you talk a little bit about the Phi Gam house? Where was it?

DT: 78 Easton Avenue. It was, at that time, the best fraternity on campus and, a year or two after I left, it was, nationally, the best Phi Gamma Delta chapter in the country. So, we had some terrific young men, just a great confluence of a great housemother, a cook and her husband, [who] lived in the house, kept it clean, fed us well.

SH: Do you remember their names?

DT: Yes, the housemother was Sudie Lumpkin, God bless her, and the cook was Beulah Jackson and her husband was Deacon Jackson. He was a deacon in the local Baptist church, and, spoiled as we were, he would make our beds, clean our rooms. ... It was just a great time to go to college.

SH: Talk about the traditions, like the candlelight dinners. I know there is a lot more that today's students are not aware of.

DT: We went to football games in jackets and ties. Now, that tells you something, although if you look at some of the old newsreels of baseball games in the '30s, you'll see men in fedoras wearing ties. It was tradition among all the fraternities at Rutgers, and they were, again, the majority of the students, would have jackets and ties required to have dinner. ... We did it without complaining and we did it because it was what you did, and, when you went to a home football game on a Saturday, you put on a jacket and tie and you went to the football game. It was just part of the culture.

SH: Did most people go to the football games?

DT: Yes. Football games, for those of us that lived on the campus--many still commuted, many had other jobs--would go the football games, and the current site of the Rutgers Stadium was the old stadium, and then, cheer loudly for pretty good football teams.

SH: When you were here on campus as a freshman, was there any kind of initiation?

DT: In those days, we all had freshman uniforms. We had a freshman dink. A dink is like a floppy hat--I don't see one here [in the Rutgers Oral History Archives' office]. Ours were black with a "58." We had to wear a tie, a freshman tie.

SH: What is a freshman tie?

DT: Was a black and red repp tie, diagonal stripes, and we had to wear that tie and that dink for a couple of months, until there was a contest with the sophomore class behind the old gym, which is still there, [the College Avenue Gym]. It was some sort of a silly game involving a huge ball and, if the freshmen won, we could then take off our ties and our dinks. We never won, because it was always fixed. [laughter] So, we always had to wear our ties and our hats, I think until the end of the semester.

SH: Were there other requirements of a freshman?

DT: There were, but very loosely enforced, like you need to know the *alma mater* and some school traditions. ... That was a minor part, but we could sure tell each other, with our little hats and our jacket and our little ties. [laughter]

SH: What about mandatory chapel?

DT: We had mandatory chapel, every week. During my freshman year, it was around noontime, I think, on a Tuesday, in Kirkpatrick Chapel. The trick was to get through it without falling asleep. They would, in their best effort, get some speakers there to talk to us about various things. I don't think any of us remember any speakers or any topics, but, yes, that was part of our cultural and our moral education, is to go to freshman chapel. It wasn't religious--it was just in the chapel, where they would talk to you about how you should be a good person.

SH: There was attendance taken, right?

DT: Probably. I don't think we would have gone, although we were kind of like sheep, you know. If we were told to do something, we would do it, without question, and not worrying about attendance. If you were told to show up at the chapel, you would show up at the chapel. I'm sure there were a number of my classmates who said, "Ah, forget this. I'm not going to worry about that," but most of us said, "Well, that's what you've got to do. You've got to do it."

SH: Do you remember any of the mixers with Douglass? It was called Douglass then, right?

DT: It was. Well, NJC for the first year, the New Jersey College for Women, then, it became Douglass--not mixers, but another vignette, another example of what the campus was like. We would have three or four major dances a year in the gym, where that would be beautifully decorated, professionally decorated, with a band--the bands' names you'd still recognize--where you would go in a tuxedo, sometimes. ... It would be a Soph Hop and ... a Junior Prom and the

Military Ball. ... Those were the big, big events of the year, very formal, just like the pictures you see of college kids in *Life* Magazine in the '50s. That was us.

DF: We talked about initiations for freshmen. Were there any for when you joined the fraternity?

DT: Yes. In those days, we all went through hell week, pledge week, which was a week of interesting events to make you humble and realize how lucky you were to join the fraternity, but, when you're a pledge, you had to go through the back door and you had to do different things, but it was all easily accepted, readily accepted, because we were all part of the same group. Other fraternities were doing the same thing with their pledges. So, it was part of the culture, part of the college life.

SH: What was attractive to you about Phi Gam, rather than some of the others?

DT: The quality of the brothers. When you first began to pledge a fraternity, you went through rushing--they still have rushing--where you were able to visit several fraternities and you'd get to meet the kids there, the young men there, and it just clicked. I just thought these were a great bunch of guys and a couple of my classmates who lived in the same floor at Demarest Hall were also pledging there. It probably was a very happy accident, because there were a lot of good fraternities and that one just seemed to click, and they are working on you more than you're working on them, if they think that you'll fit. I think they pledged me because they thought I was smart, and then, I didn't get good grades. So, they didn't win that one, [laughter] but, yes, it was just, again, luck, just being in the right place at the right time. It worked out a great four years.

DF: Did your fraternity take part in any community service?

DT: No, that wasn't part of fraternities back then. Back then, we, fraternities, were very much involved in campus life. All of the major organizations were controlled by fraternities, all the athletics. So, they pretty much were the University. So, it was fun to be in one.

DF: Did you have any leadership positions later on with your fraternity?

DT: Yes. I was vice-president and treasurer.

DF: Did they have fraternity-wide elections or were only certain people in the fraternity, that had been there for a number of years, allowed to run?

DT: You mean within the fraternity or campus-wide?

DF: Yes, within the fraternity.

DT: Within the fraternity, and this, again, is across the board, in your junior year, you, the fraternity, all the brothers in there, would elect a president, a vice-president, treasurer, secretary, depending upon the fraternity, and they would come from the rising senior class. So, we would,

the juniors would, take over late in our junior year, and then, when we came back in the fall, we would be the leadership, and it was taken seriously. It was good stuff.

SH: What did you do between your freshman and sophomore year, that summer?

DT: My freshman and sophomore year, we were still living in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, so, I worked for Alcoa. My father was working for Alcoa in Lancaster, was able to get me a job doing some very routine work, which was great, because I made some money and I could use it toward college.

DF: With your family living in Pennsylvania, did you have to pay higher tuition than when they lived in New Jersey?

DT: I don't think there was a difference in tuition. I should know that, but I don't. I don't think the differential for out-of-state tuition came until after I finished college--not sure about that, but I don't [recall]. I think it was one tuition for all. I'd have to look that up.

DF: In your yearbook, it said you were in many other extracurricular activities. Could you describe some of them?

DT: A lot of those things you see in yearbooks in my era were puffery. You just wanted to have as long a list of things as possible. [laughter] I think my major achievements were certainly in the fraternity and ROTC and Scarlet Key, which was, at that time, a sophomore honorary host society. We wore these great looking blazers that had a scarlet key on it. That was the reason you wanted to get in these organizations, because you looked good. [laughter] ... You were, as a member of Scarlet Key, called upon to give tours, to greet guests, to be the wholesome, well-groomed college kid with the jacket and the tie, to be a host to anyone coming to the campus--fun stuff.

DF: One of the things that caught my eye was the *Chicago Tribune* Medal.

DT: I have no idea what that was for--probably an ROTC award--don't know what it was for. [laughter]

SH: Talk about your decision to go into Advanced ROTC then.

DT: I think those of us in ROTC were aware that the draft was still around. This was, again, '54 and many of us felt we'd rather serve as an officer than as an enlisted man. It was a very selfish decision, and the possibility of a career was also there, although most of us would serve our three or four or five years and get out. So, sure, it was competitive. You had to apply to go from the first two years, which was required for everyone, to get into the last two years. So, you had to have good grades--you had to do well in your first two years. So, it was some recognition in just being able to get into Advanced ROTC. So, those of us who were in it were a pretty good group of guys. We loved what we were doing, we had good grades, so on, and so forth. ... So, it wasn't an elite group, but almost, because you're taking a class of about forty or fifty out of several hundred. So, it was competitive admission.

SH: Was it at the end of your freshman year that you made the change from engineering or did you change mid-semester?

DT: I hung in there for two-and-a-half years, and then, one Friday afternoon, during football season, I was in the physics lab and I figured, "Now, why am I here, on this beautiful day, in a physics lab while all my friends are probably drinking beer, having a good time?" I figured, "I can't do this." I wasn't that good a student anyway in engineering. So, I figured, you know, I didn't want to do it. It wasn't fun for me. So, I moved over to something that was a lot easier.

DF: Why economics?

DT: It was the easiest thing to transfer to. It had the most liberal requirements.

SH: Did you have to go and talk to someone in the administration to make that change?

DT: Went to the Dean of Men, one of the [deans], the Associate Dean of Men, Ed Curtin, and said, "You know, I just don't like this," so on. He said, "Okay," and he made a phone call and it was done. It was very simple then. Deans could do things in seconds, said, "Okay, you're in economics. Go see Mrs. Martin in the Economics Department and you're all set."

DF: Did you have any close relationships with deans or professors?

DT: Well, yes, the Associate Dean of Men, Ed Curtin, was a fraternity brother and he was very kind to our fraternity, as was the University Librarian, fraternity brother, the Associate Director of Admissions, and they would, once every couple of weeks, come to the house and have lunch. Again, it was a different culture, different era, where they would be there talking to us, hanging out with us.

SH: Was lunch as formal as dinner? Were you still in a jacket and tie?

DT: No. Lunch was in what you wore to class, which was then, typically, charcoal grey slacks, a white button-down shirt, never jeans. You were never sloppy in the '50s. Okay, if you look at the yearbooks, now, that's the way we dressed all the time. ...

SH: David was just looking at them. [laughter]

DT: Just what you do.

DF: What kind of drills did you do in ROTC training?

DT: Marching, basically, and that was kind of the fun of being in the Advanced ROTC program, because you were given increasingly responsible positions. You were a flight commander or a group commander. I was fortunate to be the vice wing commander, so, I could scream at the whole group, you know. It was just marching, marching, marching back and forth, learning how

to drill. When you think about it, kind of senseless for Air Force people to learn how to drill, but that's what we did, week after week after week.

SH: Was there the Queens Guard?

DT: Queens Guard. The Queens Guard was, and probably still [is] today, an elite drill team, where competitive [cadets], those who were typically good athletes, would apply to be in the Queens Guard. I was not in the Queens Guard. They were good then and, at Rutgers, for several years, was almost world-famous for the quality of their drill.

DF: These drills took place early in the morning.

DT: The afternoon, in Buccleuch Park, right over there.

DF: Going back to your fraternity, how many years did you live at the house?

DT: ... Except for my freshman year, all of them. That was, again, typical. You wanted to live there.

SH: Between your sophomore and junior year, did you go back to Pennsylvania?

DT: I think I was still--I'm trying to remember if we were back in New Jersey then or not, may have been back in New Jersey--but, again, worked for Alcoa. Again, my dad was transferred back to New Jersey. So, the summers were spent working for Alcoa, as a mechanic's helper, making tremendous money back in those days. I was making about a buck-ninety an hour, which was a lot of money for a college kid in the late 1950s.

DF: Did they have a minimum wage at the time?

DT: I don't know. I don't know. You're the historian--I don't know if minimum wages were around then, [laughter] but it was a union job and the unions in the metal industries, like aluminum and steel, were enormously powerful. ... Because you happened to be a part-time summer worker, you got the same pay as other folks and it was good stuff.

SH: Were you ever able to do any travel, for spring break, perhaps?

DT: No, I wasn't, and that wasn't done very much. It required money and most of us, in those years, didn't have a lot of money. Sure, there were three or four good friends whose parents had a lot of money. They might travel, but most of us, we would work in the wintertime, over Christmas break--it was then called Christmas break--for the post office then. You'd make money. Most of us worked part-time, all the way through college and through the summers and through vacations.

SH: Did you work while you were in school or only during the breaks when you were in college?

DT: I worked during school as well. The best job in our fraternity was to work the kitchen crew, where you got free meals and a lot of food, ... either we'd trade off washing dishes or waiting tables. It was such a good job, there was a waiting list to get on there, because you got two weeks' free food and you ate like a king, because you were working in the kitchen and all you'd do is eat and you'd wait the tables, you'd wash the dishes. [laughter] That was one way of making money, because you got half your board bill--part-time jobs in the University, things of that sort.

SH: Was there a curfew?

DT: Not for the men. There were for the women, for NJC, Douglass College.

DF: On campus, were there any pro-Communist groups?

DT: I'm sure there were, but I don't recall any.

DF: There were no demonstrations or anything like that.

DT: We were very much children of the '50s. [laughter] We just kind of followed along and did what we thought was right. Yes, I'm sure there were groups on the campus, but it was very, very low profile.

SF: Were there any political groups, like College Republicans or RU Democrats, anything of that nature?

DT: I suspect there were, but, again, low profile, low visibility.

SH: Were there "grease trucks," or something similar to the "grease trucks," at that point?

DT: No, no. The only way to get a snack was to walk downtown or walk to one of the restaurants behind the gym.

SH: They were still there then. I know they came in in the early 1960s, but I was not sure about the late 1950s.

DF: Did people often take the train to New York City or anything like that?

DT: Good question. I don't recall ever going to New York while I was in college. The campus life was a good life. Most of us lived here seven days a week, went home Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, because there was so much fun on the campus. You would go to the movies. There were four movie houses in downtown New Brunswick, and that was a good way of spending the weekend. You could walk downtown, go to a movie, go to a football game. We had parties Friday nights, Saturday nights.

DF: Did people go to basketball games as much as they went to football games?

DT: No, no, the basketball team was okay and there was a corps of basketball fans who went, but I don't recall ever going to more than one or two basketball games in my four years of college, whereas I went to almost every home football game. It wasn't the thing to do in the same way football games were.

SH: What about intramural sports?

DT: Yes, there were intramural sports. It was something called the Keller Cup. The Keller Cup was given to the fraternity or living group that had the best record in football, basketball or wrestling, maybe softball, where fraternities would field teams and play other fraternities, other living groups, in touch football, things of that sort. That was a very competitive venture, and I was not a good athlete, so, I was never involved in that. I cheered a lot, but never got involved in any of the activities. We also had something called the Brett Cup, B-R-E-T-T. The Brett Cup was, again, a competitive music program, to show you how things have changed, and I think in the fall, fraternities and living groups would compete to have the best singing. ... The entire fraternity or living group would sing a Rutgers song and a song of their choice. We almost always won that.

SH: Did you sing?

DT: We all sang.

SH: You all sang, okay.

DT: Everybody had to sing, and people like me would stand in the back and kind of mouth the words and not try to, you know, interfere with the good singers in the group, but I remember, one time, we sang a song from *Parsifal*, Richard Wagner. ... Singing was a big part of the college culture. Almost every night, after dinner, we'd sing a couple of songs. At parties, we would sing and sing and sing and sing, drink a lot of beer, but a lot of singing, too, and it was what college kids did who lived in fraternities, mainly. You would sing after supper. It sounds awful silly now, but it sure is fun. After you'd finish your meal, you're sitting around and somebody would start singing a couple of songs. We'd sing two or three songs, and that was it.

SH: No one had to play the piano. You just sang a capella.

DT: Just sang. There were enough good voices in every living group to carry it, usually a handful of Glee Club members and other talented young men who could carry a tune, and we knew the words to probably twenty or thirty songs.

SH: You talked about having parties. Were women allowed in the fraternity?

DT: Sure, sure, under the very careful shepherding of the housemother and chaperones. We had to have a couple of the guys' mothers and fathers there as well, to make sure that everything was on the up-and-up, and it was. We were so naïve, maybe, is one way of saying it. We couldn't even have women, girls, in the second floor. I remember one, one year, the big scandal was that one of the fraternity brothers tried to sneak his girlfriend, whom he later married, up a fire

escape. He was ostracized. This was horrible, "How dare you even think about [doing that]?" I mean, we had this moral code that would put an abbey to shame, and we all did it. It was just part of what you did.

SH: Did the women ever take over the house?

DT: Yes. On major weekends, Soph Hop, Junior Prom, Military Ball, all the men moved out of fraternities into their dormitories, where they could find a place to sleep, and the women would then live in the fraternity for that one night.

SH: It was just one night that they were there.

DT: Right.

SH: Were they fed by the housemother and taken care of that way?

DT: Sure, right. Well, we all took our meals there, but, when it was time to go home, we went out of the fraternity into a friend's dormitory room. ...

SH: Did they resent the fact that you were leaving the fraternity to come bunk with them?

DT: We loved it, we loved it. It was exciting.

SH: Really?

DT: It was exciting.

SH: I was going to say, they were not in the fraternity.

DT: ... It was a big weekend for us. A big weekend meant that we moved out of the fraternity for one day, one night, and our dates would move into our rooms. Now, that, that's good fun.

SH: Even if they went to NJC, they would stay over.

DT: Sure, sure.

SH: Where did the dance itself take place?

DT: The gym, the old gym.

SH: The gym. You said all of them took place there.

DF: Did you have your classes in one particular building or were there a wide variety of buildings?

DT: No, pretty much the way it is today, all over the campus, almost all on this campus. Those in science and engineering would have classes over on what is now the Busch Campus--we called it the University Heights Campus--where there was the Chemistry Building, Microbiology and some engineering temporary buildings, but most of us were on this campus. Those who were in the College of Agriculture would be across town, in the College of Agriculture.

SH: Were there busses, like today?

DT: Not really. You had to kind of find your own way back and forth. There were busses, but maybe one bus [for] the afternoon. If you missed it, you walked or you hitched a ride. A lot of hitchhiking back then--you'd just put your thumb out and grab a ride.

DF: Was there a highway next-door to campus, like there is now?

DT: The campus hasn't changed that much. Route 18 is the only big change, but there was still a road there, and the Landing Lane Bridge was the only bridge to, now Busch, then University Heights. The other bridge, the Lynch Bridge, was not built then. So, you got there. Walking was not that difficult. You could walk to the Stadium from this campus and took you maybe a half-hour, wasn't that bad. You hitched rides.

DF: Did they provide busses for the football games or did people just walk?

DT: No. "The game is in the stadium. You know where it is--you get there."

SH: Where did the homecoming parade take place? Did your fraternity have a float?

DT: I don't recall homecoming that much. I suspect we were involved, but, for some reason, it never stuck in my memory. I know we did it for a number of years in the '50s, and maybe the '60s, around the College Avenue Campus, big competition, fraternities, the living groups, to build the best float, but don't have much of a memory of that, for some reason.

SH: What about the interaction with the townies?

DT: Very little, very little. When I first came to Rutgers, in 1954, the Korean War was on. [Editor's Note: The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, and lasted until a ceasefire between Communist and United Nations forces went into effect on July 23, 1953. Due to the tenuous nature of the ceasefire, significant numbers of US forces remained in South Korea over the ensuing year-and-a-half in anticipation of renewed fighting.] Camp Kilmer was a very busy place, so, it was almost a military town. If you go downtown New Brunswick, in '54 or '55, you'd see a lot of soldiers there who were based in Camp Kilmer, who had had a day off or were on leave or had a pass, that were down there. Then, when the Korean War was over, Camp Kilmer kind of got smaller and less active and it was a much different city than it is now. It was certainly a safe city. You had a Sears Roebuck, Arnold Constable [an early department store], major stores down there, four movie houses, a couple of restaurants. So, we would walk down there, but except to go to a movie, no real reason to.

SH: Do you know if Kilmer was still an embarkation point then?

DT: Yes, I believe it was, I believe it was.

SH: Was there any interaction with the military there and the ROTC here?

DT: Not that I recall, no.

SH: No speakers?

DT: No.

SH: Between your junior and senior year, you had to go to ...

DT: Summer camp. All of us in Advanced ROTC, Army and Air Force, went to summer camp. I went--I got lucky, I'm a lucky guy--I went to Burlington Air Force Base in Burlington, Vermont. Now, what better place to spend four weeks in the summer? My friends were in places like Texas and Florida, dying of the heat and miserable conditions. I was in this beautiful New England town for four weeks, where I got to fly a jet plane twice.

SH: Did you really?

DT: Pilot flew it, I flew in the back seat, but it was a good four-week program of learning everything about the Air Force, drilling, shooting, typical military kinds of activities--difficult, challenging, but we all got through it in good shape.

SH: Were you the only one from the Air Force ROTC who got to go to Burlington?

DT: Yes. They pretty much spread us out. I don't know if--no, wait, no, there were two others from Rutgers who went with me, I think Bob Bonja and Phil Burger, but there were at least three of us from Rutgers, but they were across the country. Every, not every, many Air Force bases, many Army posts, would house an ROTC summer camp.

SH: Were you paid for that?

DT: Yes. In fact, you were paid. Another advantage to being in Advanced ROTC was that you got a paycheck every month. It wasn't very much, but, back in those days, every dollar was helpful.

SH: You were still working in the kitchen at the fraternity.

DT: Whenever I could, yes.

SH: When you were finished with the camp up in Burlington, did you then come home or did you come back to campus?

DT: Depending upon when the camp was, I think I probably came home and worked a little bit, don't recall where, but any kind of part-time job, making a couple of bucks.

SH: Going into your senior year, what kind of plans were you making for after graduation? What were you looking at?

DT: It was easy. That's a good question, because those of us who were in Advanced ROTC, we knew we had the next three or four or five years mapped out and that was a wonderful advantage, because unlike those of my classmates who were worrying about finding a job, we had it all planned for us. You'd graduate, get commissioned and the Air Force or Army would say, "Okay, you're going to go to this place." I was sent to Biggs Air Force Base in El Paso, Texas. So, it was very easy to spend your senior year knowing that, "Just get decent grades, enjoy the time, enjoy the place, and then, go off, be an officer in the Air Force for a few years."

SH: Talk about your senior year and if things had changed for you on campus at that point, in 1957 and 1958.

DT: I think the one part of my senior year [that is critical is]--again, it took me four-and-a-half years to graduate--but toward the end of my four-and-a-half years, I got a job as a mail boy, again, part-time job, through the University, working in the Admissions Office. ... The Admissions Office was then in Old Queens and my job was to come by around three in the afternoon and pick up all the mail and take it to Voorhees Hall, which was then where the what was called the duplicating and mailing operation was, where I'd run all the letters through the postage meter and do that kind of stuff. Well, after about a year of doing this, part-time, you get to know some of the admissions staff and I kind of liked what they did. I kind of liked them. I said, "Gee, this is kind of a fun job." You know, you sit around all day, talking to high school kids, and don't do very much hard work. ... Because one of the admissions officers at Rutgers then, his name was Don Amick, was in Harvard for a year, working on his doctorate--he had to be in residence for a year--they had to fill his position with someone to do some of the work and I was one of those who did that. So, ... after graduation and before entering the Air Force, I worked in the Admissions Office for six months, and so, I began Admissions as a mail boy--it's a true story--and then, worked there for a few months, filling in. ... Then, to show you how easy it was for me--my kids tell me I never applied for a job in my life and I didn't [laughter]--when I left the Admissions Office, they said, "Good-bye, have a, good luck, great career," and I said, "Well, maybe I want to come back," and he said, "Well, if you do, write me a letter." This was the Admissions Director, George Kramer. So, about a year to go in the military, I'm in El Paso, Texas, had a great time there, too, wrote to George, "Dear George, I'd like to come back and work," you know, never thinking there was a process involved. He wrote back, "Sure, come on back. Your salary is 5,600 dollars a year and you start when you show up." See how simple things were then? no interviews, no long applications. So, I came back and did that for forty years.

SH: Amazing. Let us go back into your senior year; you said it took you five-and-a-half ...

DT: Four-and-a-half.

SH: Four-and-a-half, I am sorry--I gave you a whole extra year. Where did you do that extra six months? How did that work?

DT: ... After summer camp, I came back for a full senior year, because it was important that I serve a full year as a senior in ROTC, and then, I came back for one semester, fall semester. All of my friends, except a couple, had graduated and gone on, but I came back for September, October, November, December, to finish up four courses. That was fun. ... By then, you knew how to do it. You take four courses; you were involved in the campus life. Then, I worked for the Admissions Office for about a semester, then, in July of 1959, went into the Air Force.

SH: Did you stay at the fraternity when you came back?

DT: Yes. Oh, it was great, great stuff.

SH: When you were working for Admissions for those six months, did you live in the fraternity?

DT: Yes, yes, sure did, lived there an entire year.

SH: When did you get your commission, that December, mid-year?

DT: I got my commission, unlike most of my classmates, personally from the then President of Rutgers, Mason W. Gross, because I worked in Old Queens and because my boss, the then Director of Admissions, George Kramer, was a very good colleague of Mason Gross. Once I finished my extra semester and I got my diploma, I was then eligible for commissioning. So, one morning, George says, "Come here. Go upstairs and see the President." I said, "Oh, wow." So, I had my diploma given to me personally by Wherry Zingg, the University Registrar, and my gold bars pinned on me by the President of the University. Now, not many people can tell you that kind of story, but it was, again, right place, right time. It just worked out well.

SH: What kind of regrets did you have that you were not going to graduate with the rest of your class in May of 1958?

DT: Surprisingly, none. Maybe I should have, but I was just on a roll then. Things were going my way. ... Again, the point [is] that I hadn't really thought about it before, until you asked the question, because we had our life pretty well planned out. It was stress free. I knew Air Force would be three years and all I've got to do is get through some classes and work for Admissions, which I enjoyed, easy stuff; yes, no regrets.

DF: You said you had your life planned out, but had you not worked at the Admissions Office and realized that was something you wanted to do, what would have been your plan after the three years of service?

DT: Good question. Like most of us who went into the military--maybe not most of us, many of us--you always had the thought of a career in mind. Indeed, many of my classmates who went into the military stayed for careers--most did not, and that was typical. You served your three-year requirement, or four years or five years, depending upon what you were doing. Because I

had Admissions in the back of my mind and because I was convinced I was going to go back there, I never thought about that. I suppose I may have thought about staying in the Air Force as a career, which wouldn't have been a bad thing to do, although I would have gotten involved in Vietnam. So, in retrospect, my getting out probably saved my life, or may have saved my life--don't know what I would have been doing. I never had to really think about that; ... no challenges in my growing up, actually, kind of fell into things. [laughter]

SH: When you did finally get your orders, did you still want to be a pilot?

DT: No, I decided, I think, before I actually made the final decision, because you're asked, "Well, do you want to go to flight school or do you want to do a shorter tour and stay on the ground?" If you went to flight school, it was a five-year mandatory tour. If you didn't fly, it was a three-year tour. Well, when you're twenty-two years old, there's a big difference between five years and three years, and even though, yes, my life was planned, I figured, "Well, five years is a long time to commit myself. Three years is certainly doable, probably enjoyable." So, I, for probably the wrong reasons, said, "No, I'll do the three-year route."

DF: How long was flight school, if you were to have gone?

DT: About a year-and-a-half of flight school, but a good friend and classmate, Martin Kravarik--probably has been here, if not, he will be--went to flight school and had a good career, but it's a decision you make probably with very little solid information. It's a subjective decision that, "Well, I think three years is better than five." I think, basically, it was the time commitment, that, at that age, I just thought three years was a lot shorter than five years, which, when you're twenty-two, looks like a long, long time.

DF: Did you just go into a standard training program or did you have to pick your position beforehand?

DT: They assign you to a specialty. The Air Force has different specialties, and because, I guess, I was an economics major, they assigned me to be a supply officer. I guess there's some connection, not too sure. ... At first, I went to Biggs Air Force Base in El Paso, without any training, and was just kind of learning on-the-job, and then, after about three or four months, I was sent to a school in Amarillo, Texas, for about four months. It was a supply officer's school, where they actually teach you what you're supposed to do.

DF: Could you describe in detail the role of a supply officer?

DT: I was in what was called base supply and I was at a base that was a SAC base. SAC is the Strategic Air Command. It was then the elite part of the Air Force, because that was the peak of the Cold War, when Curtis LeMay was the commanding general of SAC and really brought SAC into what it was, and then, became Chief of Staff. [Editor's Note: General Curtis LeMay commanded the Strategic Air Force from 1948 to 1957, when he was appointed Vice Chief of Staff of the US Air Force. He became Chief of Staff of the US Air Force in 1961.] Because SAC was "the fair-haired boy of the Air Force," we lived in near luxury, because you were in SAC. Now, again, I just happened to luck out. I got in the right unit. My job was in something

called materiel facilities. Base supply is a unit on an Air Force base. We had heavy bombers, B-52s, which are still flying today, and the base supply is to provide all the parts you need to keep the planes flying, and then, base supply had two main parts. There was accounting, the folks who were pushing papers and trying to keep track of things, and warehousing, which was what I was doing--it was called materiel facilities--involving delivery of parts and storage of parts and receiving parts. There were about 150-plus in my unit, some civilians, mostly uniformed, and a twenty-two-year-old second lieutenant was in charge of this huge group. It was great stuff, had a good civilian assistant, Pete Rodriguez, who really ran the thing. I had some terrific NCOs, non-commissioned officers, very senior, experienced sergeants. We got along beautifully, and I spent three years doing that.

SH: As you say, SAC was the fair-haired boy, but it was also our first line of defense. What kind of security did you have there?

DT: It was probably less security, at a major Air Force base, with nuclear weapons, than there is today at an airport. You had a fenced-in base, you had minimal guards, the air police. You had to go through a fence to get onto the base, and then, to get onto the flight line, where the bombers were and where the munitions were, you go through a second checkpoint, but it wasn't very rigorous. If they saw you had the right sticker on your car, they'd let you in. I remember, one day, driving on the flight line, because, since men in my unit were on the flight line, delivering parts, I would sometimes go there to make sure things were going well. I was following this yellow ammunition truck carrying atomic bombs, with a sign saying, "Stay back one hundred feet." I figured, "Well, that's really going to protect me," but the idea was, there might be something going wrong. ... I went inventorying the nuclear arsenal, a couple of times. You go out there and you [count], "One, two, three--okay, you got them all? Good."

SH: You would just count. [laughter]

DT: But, it was secure. I mean, I'm making light of it, and it was a very well-run organization, but, again, it was military. We were kind of in a remote part of El Paso. We were near Fort Bliss, Texas, an Army post, which was then a huge, huge base. So, there was some protection. Because of the Fort Bliss presence and because we were kind of on the outskirts of El Paso, it was almost secure by virtue of its location in the middle of the desert.

SH: Was there ever a scramble? I know there are drills, those kinds of things.

DT: Sure, never because of a threat, but, in those years, we had B-52s in the air all the time, very challenging, expensive, in terms of both men and fuel. We would have B-52s flying from El Paso, Texas, up toward the Canadian border, kind of playing with the Russian border, because we never knew, "Are they going to fire at us or are we going to fire at them?" ... One way of having that nuclear deterrence is by having your planes in the air, because the Russians knew that, that if they did strike first, those dozen or so B-52s flying near their borders would then get their orders to go in and bomb them.

DF: Were they actually armed with nuclear weapons?

DT: Absolutely, yes. They were always carrying nuclear weapons.

SH: Were there any accidents, refueling accidents or anything like that, that you were aware of?

DT: Yes. I lost two good friends through accidents while I was at Biggs Air Force Base. They were both flying a plane called a KB-50, which was a version of the B-29, the one that bombed Hiroshima, but it was a tanker and it was filled with fuel. There was a ... midair accident and it blew up and two of my friends [were killed], not close friends, but because we were all bachelor officers living together in the same BOQs, bachelor officer quarters, we got to know each other. ... So, over the course of the three years, I lost two friends in two separate accidents. It was a dangerous profession--still is. You're flying planes that are laden with fuel and carrying real weapons, and, sometimes, despite the best training and the best skill of the pilots, you don't make it.

SH: Did you ever go up, to get flight pay? Was that something that you could do as part of your job?

DT: No, I was not eligible for flight pay. You had to be either a pilot or a navigator-bombardier or a doctor. Doctors who were flight surgeons got flight pay, but I did fly in the planes, just because, "You want to go along in a plane?" "Sure." "Hop onboard. We'll go for a mission."

SH: Did you go overseas at all?

DT: No, no, spent the entire three years in El Paso, except for, I think, four months in Amarillo, Texas, for training.

DF: You said you lived in a barracks.

DT: Called bachelor officers' quarters. Again, one of the reasons you want to be an officer is because you live in luxury. You live in an apartment. The rooms are cleaned for you, every day. You have a bedroom and a common living room and kitchen. If you're enlisted, you would tend to live in an open barracks area with a couple of dozen bunks. We didn't do that. We did things a lot better. [laughter]

SH: Was the officers' club the center of the social life?

DT: Absolutely, yes, officers' club, spent a lot of time there, drinking beer, having fun. El Paso was a great city. It was right across the Rio Grand from Juarez, Mexico, where they had lots of activities, bull fights, some good restaurants.

SH: There was no problem going back and forth across the border as part of the SAC group.

DT: No, no. ... Juarez welcomed the military presence in El Paso, because it helped pay their way.

SH: Yes. [laughter]

DF: Did you interact with the local Army personnel? You said there was an Army base nearby.

DT: Interact militarily, no, but socially, yes. We would be--we, the Air Force officers, would be--welcome at their officers' club, which was huge, and, likewise, they would be welcome at our club. So, you would, from time to time, sit with an Army officer and just chew the fat and, you know, share stories. Fort Bliss had three movie houses--we only had one. So, we'd sometimes go there, to the movies, watched a couple of polo matches, of all things, but this was the Army in the 1950s. ... They had polo matches, and you'd sit out there at the officers' club at Fort Bliss in lounge chairs--I'm not making this up--being served drinks while you're watching the polo match go before your eyes. It was not hard duty. [laughter] Most of my colleagues had it a lot tougher than I did. They were doing a lot more dangerous and more challenging work.

SH: Were there other dignitaries or celebrities that were brought on the base for entertainment?

DT: No. Good question--I think because we had a small base and because Fort Bliss was mainly a training base, meaning that there was a relatively small cadre, group of permanent officers, most were there from training, including men from NATO countries, which is kind of interesting. I don't think we were the kind of base, as either Fort Bliss or ... Biggs Air Force Base, that would merit a Bob Hope coming by, for example, or something like that.

SH: Talk about the NATO forces that were training there. Were they also coming to Biggs?

DT: Fort Bliss was the principal training base for the Army in the 1950s for anti-aircraft missiles, basically, and NATO countries, Germany, the rest of the countries, would send over their officers to Fort Bliss for some period of time--not too sure how long--to learn how to use anti-missile missiles, how to use anti-aircraft missiles.

DF: Did they speak English well and interact a lot?

DT: Didn't interact that much with them. I do recall, a couple of times, going to the Fort Bliss officers' club, watching the German officers drink beer. That's a sight to behold. They know how to drink beer and how to enjoy themselves, [laughter] but one of the units at Biggs Air Force Base was a tow target squadron. A tow target squadron are planes that actually tow targets, targets that the Fort Bliss anti-aircraft training groups could practice [against], and we had B-57s, which was a twin-engine bomber made by Martin, a British model, and F-100s, a fighter. ... They would either actually, physically, tow targets or electronically pretend to be the enemy and have them practice that way.

DF: Did you prefer life in Texas or New Jersey? Could you talk about how it differed?

DT: I think three years was perfect. [laughter] ... For a kid who had almost never been out of New Jersey, except for a couple of years in Pennsylvania, to go from the lush greenery of New Jersey to the desert--and El Paso is a desert, it's flat--but because it was so different, because of the friends you make in the military. Military tends to be enabling of friendships. Because you're all away from home, you're all doing similar things, you're all in this together, you

develop some really good friendships, have an awful lot of fun together. You work hard, sometimes, but, after three years, I think I was ready to get back to New Jersey.

SH: What did you do on leave?

DT: Came back home, came back to New Jersey, visited my family, visited some old Rutgers friends down here in New Brunswick.

SH: What would a typical day be like for you when you were working? What kind of duty did you have?

DT: A typical day would involve my getting on my scooter, because it was scooter heaven--everything is flat, you'd fill your gas tank for twenty-five cents for the week--and I would putt from the bachelor officers' quarters down to the base supply building and would probably start the day with a cup of coffee with the senior non-commissioned officers, the sergeants, and discuss what to do. I don't think I did a heck of a lot while I was down there, but I'm sure I accomplished something, but it was mostly a management/leadership job, where you're worried mostly about personnel problems, "Which airman is in trouble? Which units aren't functioning well? How do we get this to work better? Where do we have a morale problem? Where are there discipline problems?" So, you're basically in that kind of job, which is a great thing about being a young officer--you learn fast how to be a manager, how to administer, how to be a leader, because you have to. You're thrown into it. You say, "Okay, here, this is your unit. Make it work," and, if you screw up, you get in trouble--so, make it work.

SH: Did you have good senior officers over you?

DT: Yes. I worked for a Major Philip D. Osborne, who was trained as an architect, but flew in World War II, flew P-38s. A P-38 is a fighter, twin-engine fighter, but like some of the World War II vets, he got called back, and so, he put his career in architecture on hold. Because World War II ended in 1945, Korea began in 1950, that's a short period of time, so, an awful lot of those men going back in 1950 had just finished living World War II, and Major Osborne was one of those. So, once he was called back, in ... the '50s, he figured, "Well, I may as well stay and get my twenty years in," because, after twenty years, you can retire as half pay. So, a fair number, maybe most of the senior officers that I worked for while I was in the Air Force, were World War II officers who came back for Korea and stayed on because they would be able to retire, you know, after twenty years--rather common.

DF: When you socialized, did you ever socialize with the senior officers?

DT: Rarely. You just didn't do that. You tended to hang out with other lieutenants, because they were your age, most weren't going to stay in for a career and we were like being in college all over again. There was a distinction between being a lieutenant and a major and a colonel. They were very, very different, in age and responsibility and outlook. They were certainly friendly, ... but, no, you didn't socialize.

DF: There was never really a time when they discussed their experiences in war.

DT: No. I don't think they would have, not wanted to, but you didn't go up to a lieutenant colonel who's having a cup of coffee and say, "Hey, Colonel, can I talk about the war with you?" No, you didn't do that. [laughter] I mean, ... you were very aware of rank in the military then and you were okay with other lieutenants, but even captains. Well, captains, they were your senior officer and you don't speak unless you're spoken to, that kind of distinction.

SH: What about the NCOs? The Air Force was relatively new. Had they all been in the Army Air Forces, because you said you had some older NCOs?

DT: Good question. I think the senior sergeants that were working for me had to be World War II veterans, because this is 1959, or, rather, I'm sorry, Korean War veterans at least. They were nearing their twenty, so, '59, '49, yes, I would think most of them were probably World War II or perhaps had served in World War II, gotten out and come back to Korea. Extraordinary group of men--again, I was in SAC, Strategic Air Command. Think of Curtis LeMay, who ran the Air Force--he would always make sure the best got into his SAC and this country said, "Fine, because SAC is protecting us from the Russians. So, if you want to, you know, cull all the best NCOs from other branches, do it." So, we had some superior, superior people working in SAC.

SH: I know it was extremely competitive to get into SAC.

DT: Yes, yes.

SH: Did you ever entertain the thought of staying in?

DT: A couple of times. I was asked to stay in, but I just, at that point, didn't feel that serving in the Air Force as a non-rated, meaning not a pilot, was in my best interest, because, if you see any senior officer in the Air Force, he, or she now, is a pilot. You just don't get very far in the Air Force unless you're a pilot. So, if I wanted a career, I would have needed to go to flight school, if I could have even gotten through that, and I figured, "Well, that's not worth it." It was great. In fact, I went back for three years in the Reserve, about early '60s, I guess, McGuire Air Force Base, weekend kind of stuff, a lot of fun, as a captain, but that was about it.

SH: You stayed in the Reserves when you got out.

DT: I volunteered. My college roommate, Bob Max, who was in the Reserves, said, "Why don't you come in, join me, as a Reserve [officer]?" I said, "Sure." So, I did and spent three years, and then, my obligation was up and they needed to reduce the number of officers in that unit and I said, "Well, I'll volunteer." I mean, I did it because it was kind of fun for three years and I got out, but that was my only other Air Force experience, but it was a good one. It was a good one.

SH: Did you do this during the Vietnam War?

DT: It had to be from about 1968, '69, '70, '71, in that period, where I would do that, but I was then raising a family and I was working. It was increasingly difficult to go a weekend a month, really, away to McGuire Air Force Base, and two weeks in the summer away to McGuire Air

Force Base, and do that and do that well. My roommate did it, became a full colonel in the Reserves, had a great career, but I just didn't feel it was something I could do well. So, I said, "Okay, I did my three years. It was enjoyable, but I have too many other responsibilities right now to keep it up."

SH: Would there have been any chance that you would have been called to serve in Vietnam? I know there was such a buildup.

DT: What were the years of Vietnam? I should know that, but I don't.

SH: It starts building up in 1964 and 1965.

DT: Okay. I got out of the regular Air Force in 1962 and I didn't go back in until '68, '69, '70. So, I missed it, not by design, but just by happenstance. That's just the way it worked out.

SH: Did you see a difference from the military that you had served in in El Paso, Fort Biggs?

DT: Yes, in El Paso and in regular active duty and Reserve duty? not really, but I think that's because when you're on active Reserves, serving a weekend a month, you do it with your own unit and you're kind of uninvolved with the other units on the base, and your two weeks in the summer, again, with your own unit. It was a good unit. It was an aerial port squadron that was designed to operate bases. If there were a need to have an Air Force base go to the middle of Africa, an aerial port squadron would go there and set up everything from the terminal to the control towers, things of that sort. I didn't really see any difference. We were all Reservists and that made us kind of unique. We're all regular people working a regular week, that on one weekend a month, we would go down there and "play army."

SH: You talked about Curtis LeMay as the head of SAC. Did you ever meet LeMay? Did he ever inspect the base?

DT: No, no. He was kind of a mythical, godlike--you didn't want to meet him. [laughter] We knew he was there and the stories are legion, and, sometimes, on History Channel or Discovery Channel, you'll see a little bit on Curtis LeMay, and an amazing man. He was the right man in the right place at the right time.

SH: An icon, I guess.

DT: Yes, absolutely, yes, good description.

SH: You talked about making the decision to come back. It was so easy.

DT: Right.

SH: Did you have a family then to move, too?

DT: No, I didn't get married until 1964. So, I came back here, I got an apartment on Easton Avenue, 85 Easton Avenue, and lived there while I was working in Admissions, until we got married, then, moved to, actually, married student housing on the Busch Campus for a couple of years, and then, Dunellen, and then, Kendall Park.

SH: I know, from the pre-interview survey, that you have two sons.

DT: Two sons.

SH: They both came to Rutgers

DT: Yes. By, again, coincidence, both my sons and both my daughters-in-law all went to Rutgers and that was, well, partially by design with my two sons, because they were terrible students in high school. They began to wake up late, went to Middlesex County College and, eventually, got to Rutgers, and my two daughters-in-law did it the right way, went from high school to college, but a good Rutgers family.

DF: What did your sons study at Rutgers?

DT: Greg graduated in '93, was an English major and Matt, same year, had a dual major in criminal justice and philosophy.

SH: Were they twins?

DT: No. ... Greg's forty-two, Matt's forty. They began college very, very late, because they were going nowhere out of high school. They had terrible grades, no interest whatsoever in college and it took awhile for them to begin to realize that this is where you ought to go if you want to keep going forward in life.

DF: Did they serve in the military?

DT: They both served in the Navy, in a Reserve program, which was the best thing that ever happened to them, helped them mature and get their heads on straight. It was like a nine-month Navy active duty experience, and then, a four or five or six-year Reserve experience, but a good one for both.

DF: Did they enlist at the same time?

DT: They were two years apart, although Greg took five years to graduate from high school-- goes to show you how he was doing. So, they were about a year apart, and then, Greg went into the Navy first and liked it and Matt said, "Gee, I'll do the same thing."

SH: Obviously, you stayed involved with Rutgers because of your employment with Rutgers, but have you stayed involved as an alumnus as well?

DT: Very much so. I've been involved with my class, '58. I'm president of the class and been so forever, so, very much involved in reunion planning. We've got a great class, very active class. We have a little mini-reunion at homecoming every year. An example, I think, of the importance of fraternities in my era--at a recent football game, Navy game, this fall, there were five of us fraternity brothers, same age, same class, still hanging out together at a football game, almost fifty years later.

SH: I think that is great.

DT: That's the kind of draw and friendship we have--a couple of roommates, two roommates, three roommates, yes.

SH: You talked about getting your commission from President Mason Gross.

DT: Mason W. Gross, right.

SH: When does he become President of the University? He was not the President when you came here in 1954, was he?

DT: Mason--when I came to Rutgers, Lewis Webster Jones was the President and Mason Gross was the Provost. In that era, the Provost was kind of a senior executive vice-president and President Jones retired and Mason Gross became President--my guess is '57, '58, '59, somewhere in there--and then, served as a great leader for a number of years, until he retired, and then, Edward Bloustein became President, and then, Francis Lawrence and, now, Richard McCormick. [Editor's Note: The years of service for the Presidents of Rutgers University named above are: Lewis Webster Jones, 1951 to 1958; Mason W. Gross, 1959 to 1971; Edward J. Bloustein, 1971 to 1989; Francis L. Lawrence, 1990 to 2002; Richard L. McCormick, 2002 to 2011.]

SH: You have seen the whole change.

DT: Yes.

SH: As a student, as an alumnus and as an employee, you have lots of memories, I will bet, of these different administrations and their impact.

DT: Yes. Now, it's as so often happens with leaders--we seem to get the right President, with the right qualifications, at the right time. Mason Gross was a brilliant, charismatic President who built Rutgers from a small, sleepy school in the 1950s to a much bigger, much better [institution], more buildings. Then, Bloustein kind of moved further and built us up academically, got Rutgers into the Association of American Universities, the elite group that you want to be in to be a good university. So, we saw that kind of growth.

SH: A tremendous time to be here and be involved with this.

DT: Yes, yes, but it's much, much different today than it was.

SH: Not just in numbers, I am sure. [laughter]

DT: The students are better now than they were. Going back to my point about being a Depression baby, it was easy to get into Rutgers in 1954 because there weren't that many high school graduates who wanted to go to college. Now, today, you know, there are waiting lists and you apply to three or four or five or a dozen schools and it's a great deal of pressure. It wasn't that way ... in 1954. You kind of applied and got in.

SH: When you were here as a student, who was your favorite professor?

DT: Sidney Simon. Sidney Simon was a professor of accounting, arguably the most difficult professor on the campus, but also probably the best loved, because he was so tough and so good. He taught accounting, not an easy subject, but he had a gift, a natural gift for teaching, and you didn't miss his class because he knew if you were there or not. He would constantly call on you at random, and pity you if you weren't prepared. He would go, "Mr. Taylor, number six, please." So, you learned--he made us learn, made us work. Don't know if a lot of students mention him, but I think [among] those who were taking accounting courses, Sidney Simon stands out. I have to confess that some professors I took, because they never took attendance, one course, "Comparative Economic Systems," I went three times in the semester, but that was then.

SH: You must have passed.

DT: I must have passed. Well, there are ways of getting through a course with a "B" without attending.

DF: Now?

DT: You can't do that now. ... Things are more serious.

DF: Would most professors interact with the class or would a lot of them just lecture?

DT: Well, remember, all the professors wore shirts and ties and suits, as they did in high school, all the males. I'm not sure that's changed that much. I think, in the larger classes, professors simply had to lecture the best they could. When I was taking the basic history course, it was then called Western Civilization 101, 102, they began then, which was a great way of teaching--they got their four best professors, Peter Charanis, Richard Schlatter, Dick McCormick, the first Dick McCormick, and McConnell, and they were each specialists in a certain part of history, Charanis in early history, and they would spend a half a semester lecturing, in the Engineering Building. Now, these were the best of the department back then, great lecturers, and then, you would break out into two recitation sessions. We went three days a week, remember, for fifty-minute hours. So, it's Monday, Wednesday, Friday, for example, from eleven o'clock until ten minutes to twelve. Well, one of those hours, Professor McCormick would lecture on relatively modern history. The other two hours, on say a Wednesday and Friday, you would meet with a graduate student in a smaller group and discuss it, but it was a way of exposing us to really quality [lecturers]. Rutgers has always had a terrific History Department, even way back then, and these men were just gifted lecturers and you would actually sit there and take notes, because they were

so good. Interaction, no, to go back to your first question, because they were [above us]. You could always see them, they were approachable, but you didn't do that. They were kind of held in awe, that unless you were really in trouble or you were really a good student, you tended to go to class and take your notes and go back and study.

SH: We read in the yearbook about a reception that the President would hold. Were you ever at a reception at the President's house?

DT: No, not as an undergraduate, no. That was typically for the student leaders, Student Council, things of that sort.

SH: We talked about some of the traditions at Rutgers, mandatory chapel, mandatory ROTC.

DT: Jackets and ties. [laughter]

SH: Jackets and ties, right.

DT: Candlelight dinners.

SH: Yes. Are there other traditions that we have not asked you about?

DT: Not that I recall.

SH: Was there a rivalry with Princeton when you were here? We hear about it in the 1930s and 1940s.

DT: Football rivalry, yes--they always beat us. Princeton was a part of many of us at Rutgers back in those days, because they had terrific parties then--still do--and they would serve hard liquor at Princeton parties. Rutgers would permit beer at its parties, but that's it. Of course, there was other stuff available, but you'd go down the road to Princeton and, if you knew someone--one of my fraternity brothers had a brother who was at Princeton, so, we'd go down there a couple of times a year and crash one of their parties. ... That was a much different world to a Rutgers kid. Princeton in the 1950s was wealthy, white, upper-class, privileged, where college students would have bottles of the finest alcohol available with their name on it, on a bar served by, you know, dozens of waiters, but that was Princeton in the 1950s. So, we were very much a middle-class, working-class college, which is, I think, why I liked it, because that's what I was, basically, but down there, then, very different. They dressed beautifully, oh, did they dress well down there, oh, their Brooks Brothers jackets. ...

SH: You talked about Princeton being very white. What about Rutgers? How diverse was your class at that point?

DT: By today's standards, not very diverse at all. John Cash was a classmate, Jesse, forget his last name--we had three or four black students.

SH: Were they veterans or had they come to Rutgers from high school?

DT: No, no, they were, I think, quite frankly, they were almost token blacks, but, back then, the Rutgers Admissions was pretty blind. ... If you did well in high school, because I worked in Admissions and I knew what the records were, if you had a good high school record and did well in the SAT, we didn't really know what your ethnicity was. ... So, these were kids who were probably from families or situations where they were encouraged to perform well in high school and encouraged to go to college. They were just like us. I mean, ... you didn't really, unless you thought about it, realize that they were a different color. They were kids, just like us. They spoke like us, acted like us, they thought like us.

SH: Were they admitted into the fraternities?

DT: No, and that was probably one of the blots on fraternities then. We also had a distinction among Jewish fraternities and non-Jewish fraternities. It was very subtle. We probably didn't know what we were doing, but I think there were always one or two who felt that, "Well, you know, our tradition is to have these kinds of kids." Now, because you're choosing your own fraternity brothers, when you're going out looking for freshmen, you looked for kids like yourself, and I think, almost subconsciously, you tend to invite kids that are like you, and probably the same religious background and ethnic background. There were four very strong Jewish fraternities on the campus and that was kind of okay. I mean, the Jewish kids, they were good friends and good pals, all hung out together, but they kind of liked going home to their own house, their own family, as it were, where they were Jewish. No, there may be a dozen or so black kids in our class, if that.

DF: When you returned from the Air Force, did you go to graduate school at Rutgers as well?

DT: Yes, because it was free. Staff, I guess, still can go [with] free tuition. It just made sense, that I realized that the two senior people in my office had doctorates, that it would make sense if I wanted to go further in college administration, I needed to get graduate work. So, you did it easily, part-time, at night. I was at the Graduate School of Education and just chipped away at it over a number of years, night classes, summer classes, early mornings, doing reading and research, [that] kind of thing.

DF: How much had the campus changed in that period of time, from when you first went a decade earlier until when you came back for graduate school in the 1960s?

DT: That's a fair question, but, because I was living it every day, I didn't notice it. It's like when you're growing older--you know, we all grow older together--you can't really tell the difference. Sure, we knew that it was getting bigger and we knew, in Admissions, the quality of students, we knew the challenges of admissions as the years went on, but it was not discernable. I think, unlike a classmate who would come back after five or ten or twenty or thirty years, would say, "Wow, this place has really changed," I would say, "Oh, it has? Oh, yes, I guess it has." ... When you're on the campus every day, working, you don't sense the changes in as dramatic a way as you would if you were visiting once every couple of years.

DF: People were still wearing shirts and ties. Everything was still formal.

DT: That, the '60s changed everything in America, changed everything--not always for the better, either. ... There were rough times here in the '60s. We had the Newark riots, we had the sit-ins here--it was a tough time for all of us. I think, because I worked here, it was easier for me to tolerate and to understand than for my classmates, who might be seeing it from a distance, who were saying, "What are you doing at Rutgers? Why are you letting that go on?"

SH: Can you talk about that at all? Are you comfortable discussing that?

DT: Sure. I think because I was influenced so strongly by a happy '50s experience, as many of us were, although I knew it wouldn't go on forever, you kind of hope that some of the values and some of the attitudes that we had in the '50s would extend, but, of course, they can't. Things change, history moves forward and the kids in the 1960s were very different in many respects from the kids of the 1950s. I think as soon as the whole concept of *in loco parentis* [Latin for, "In place of a parent"], where deans and housemothers controlled the campus, was removed from the campus--housemothers left, deans of students didn't have the same authority or power--I think faculty began to struggle with how their classes were running. Because it happened on my watch, I kind of said, "Well, yes, I kind of saw both sides. I saw the unhappiness of the kids, the anger of the kids, the enthusiasm of the kids, the unhappiness with Vietnam, the unhappiness with authority." I never really liked what they were doing, but I understood why. I understood that they had to do it, and we had a great leader in Mason Gross, who invited the students to his office, saying, "Don't take over Old Queens. Come to my office, hang out. Yes, you're part of the University." He handled it very well, as he did with the Newark riots, but it was difficult. [Editor's Note: The Newark riots began on July 12, 1967, lasted six days and resulted in twenty-six deaths.]

SH: What did they do and what was the policy during the Newark riots? Did it affect you in Admissions?

DT: Directly, because ... the Newark riots happened, I guess had to be late '60s, but [it affected] two of my Admissions colleagues, Bob Swab, was Director of Admissions for Newark, and C.T. Miller, was the Assistant Director of Admissions in Newark. These were the times when the minority populations, the black populations, were increasingly dissatisfied with their life and frustrated with an inability to move forward, and they were right in many respects. They took over the buildings on the Newark Campus and it was a very dangerous, volatile situation and Mason Gross, then President, went up there. [Editor's Note: Robert Swab and C.T. Miller were relieved of their duties as part of the University's agreement with the Black Organization of Students in response to the February 1969 takeover of Conklin Hall on the Rutgers-Newark Campus.] The demands of the students were, "You've got to fire the two Admissions people, because they're white and they're not sensitive to our needs," and Mason Gross--he later met with us privately and said, "When you have a gun to your head, you give in," and he felt he had a gun to his head, because, had he not done that, who knows? So, he made the best decision he could and he told my two colleagues, "You're out." Now, they weren't fired. They had other make-up jobs, they still got their salaries, but it deeply hurt Bob Swab, the director, and, for the rest of his life, he suffered from that. He died many years ago, but he saw the injustice of that, that he was doing, he thought, a good job, and he was. They were admitting as many black kids as they

possibly could, but Newark then, ... and possibly now, had terrible, terrible high schools and as much as you wanted to admit more black kids, they simply didn't have the ability. ... We learned the hard way, to admit any kid, black or white or some other color, who wasn't prepared is even worse than saying, "No, you're not ready. Go to a community college, go learn how to be an academic, and then, come to see us." So, that was a very, very real part of my career at Rutgers. It was a part of the era where we had riots in Detroit, we had riots in Newark. This country was in bad shape. Civil Rights Movement was barely getting going and I still recall, to just go back some number of years, when I drove back from El Paso, Texas, in 1962, I went to Alabama to visit an Air Force colleague, a physician, pediatrician, because we were good friends. I said, "I'll stop by on the way home. I'll say hello." As I drove across Texas and Mississippi and Alabama and I would stop at a service station, this is 1962, I would see water fountains, "Whites Only," "Colored Only." I'd go, "Holy mackerel." Now, New Jersey didn't have that. We were pretty progressive, compared to the South and the Southwest. I went to a hotel and it was, "Yes, sir, yes, sir, you're in the air-conditioned section over there for whites." The hotel, which probably only recently let blacks stay there, no air-conditioning, nothing, and I said, you know, "It's a different world." So, yes, we had to have something happen in this country to stir things up, and that was all part of the '60s, Civil Rights, Plainfield riots, Newark riots, Detroit, where else?

SH: Watts.

DT: In Watts, oh, yes, sure, of course.

SH: Being here at Rutgers, as you say, Gross did what he could with what he had.

DT: He made the right decision, absolutely. He probably saved lives.

SH: You were also here when they started Livingston College.

DT: Yes. One of my colleagues, Tom Madsen, was the first Admissions Director for Livingston. He was the Assistant Director at Newark and moved into that position.

SH: Were you here when it was still under discussion and when they discussed how to get the faculty and the students?

DT: It was clear, obviously, for those of us in Admissions, because we had more applications from good students than we had room, we had to get bigger. ... The thought was, "College Avenue Campus is pretty much hemmed in geographically. The Agricultural College and Douglass College are pretty much hemmed in where they are. We have this huge hunk of property across the river--why don't we develop it?" and that began Livingston College. There were a lot of mistakes with Livingston College, the biggest one being [that] we opened a year too early. We opened before we were really ready, physically, academically, socially, but because of the need to get students here and the need, I think, to demonstrate that Rutgers was doing everything possible to admitting a more diverse population, Livingston was seen as a college that had different admissions standards, that would reach out very strongly to the underprivileged, to minorities, to non-traditional students. ... We just jumped the gun a year too early. ... If we had

our druthers, we would have waited until we were really solidly in place. We didn't have our druthers and we opened too soon and we suffered for that, for a number of years. We got leadership and faculty at Livingston that bought the premise of an open, liberal, progressive school, almost an experimental school. It was, and I think Livingston, to this day, is still suffering from that. Like so much in our lives, like so much in history, it was the right decision at the time. Nothing annoys me more than second-guessing, drugstore quarterbacking, "Well, you shouldn't have done that. Truman shouldn't have dropped the atomic bomb." "What? Let me sit down with you for a half hour and explain that to you." [laughter] There's all this looking backwards with 20/20 hindsight. Yes, it was a mess, took us a long time to recover, but, at that time, the best and the brightest of this University, with a considerably talented administration, said, "We have to do this," and the Board of Governors said, "We have to do this. Let's give it our best shot."

SH: What about University College? How did that coalesce and become part of the University?

DT: University College was always an evening adult division and a very good one, a very admirable one, but very much a separate entity. They didn't take part [in] any of the campus life. These were working adults who were--still admire them--working, raising families, somehow making it to the campus at night, sitting for three and four hours in the class, going home, doing homework--great, great school. They, University College, began to integrate with the undergraduate colleges, I think, back in the '90s. So, it became almost an invisible difference, that students could be from Livingston or Rutgers or Douglass or University College. Now, it's all one campus, which is great, but they were very much a separate division, almost a separate school, separate faculty. You remember, back in those days, each college had its own faculty, that there was a department of French at Rutgers, a department of French at Douglass, a department of French at University College--talk about a ridiculous way of running a university. You're spreading out your talent. There was no interaction. The faculty sometimes didn't even speak to each other, hated each other. So, Bloustein, and part of his genius was, "Look, let's have one French department, one history department. Let's use our talent together. Let's have the symbiosis of good minds working together," and that's when we became a really great university, but, back then, they were just little faculties. Each college dean hired and fired and ran his or her own little faculty.

SH: You were in admissions for all of that.

DT: Yes. Well, graduate admissions was university wide.

SH: When did you go to Graduate Admissions?

DT: About mid-'70s, I think. I think I worked in the undergraduate area for, well, maybe late '60s, but they had just an opening kind of thing. We're all in the same office and my boss probably said, "Hey, do you want to do graduate stuff for a while?" I said, "Sure, why not?"

SH: Was Admissions handling it for all the different "fiefdoms?"

DT: Yes, yes.

SH: There was one central admissions office for all the colleges.

DT: Yes, yes. Well, Douglass had its own admissions office, I should say. Let me backtrack; Douglass had its own admissions office until--not too clear about the dates, I'm sorry--maybe the 1970s, as did University College, the evening division, have its own admissions office, and the other office handled all the men's colleges, basically. That was before coed for Rutgers College. ... We brought them together, too, which, again, was a great thing.

SH: When was this reorganization? Did that coincide with Rutgers College becoming coed in 1972? Which came first?

DT: Right. I wish I had my dates better, but I was here. It was [the] '70s or '80s when the Admissions Office, almost baldly, said, "Let's have one office, even though there were individual colleges." So, we all had one office, one common application. Remember, back in those days, there were separate applications. It was like having separate colleges, for admissions, for faculty, student life, for deaning. They were all kind of contiguous with each other on the campus, but very much separate, and so, over the years, we've kind of become as we did just this past year, finally, one, one freshman class, one curriculum--only took us two hundred-and-some-odd years to do that, but here we are. [laughter]

SH: Did the reorganization under President Bloustein include the reorganization of Admissions? Was that part of the plan or was it something that just happened?

DT: I think Admissions, I'm not too sure how they were connected, but I know Admissions began to do it, because we saw the wisdom of having one common application, we saw the wisdom of sharing resources, instead of having a Douglass admissions officer and a Rutgers admissions officer and a University College admissions officer all go to the same high school. That makes no sense. Let's all be one office and have an umbrella to work on all the different colleges. Now, when the colleges came together on the graduate level, I don't recall, but it was basically on the graduate level that President Bloustein really made the difference. By combining all these small, sometimes tiny, faculties together, you begin to get the critical mass to have, as we do today, some, you know, world-class graduate programs, instead of having your colleagues all over the place, you know, to speak to them, [that] kind of thing.

DF: I just have a question about the procedure. Did you personally examine applications?

DT: Yes.

DF: If someone had an outstanding grade point average and SAT scores, would they just move that application along or would they still look at everything else?

DT: In the undergraduate area, at least when I was doing it, and I suspect it's still true today, it was basically based on your high school record, and we understood that high schools are different. A "B" in a first-rate high school is better than an "A" in a poor high school, so, you made adjustments, and your SATs. On the margin, where a student might just be neither

admissible nor in a reject category, that's where you began to read more fully into the application--activities, alumni, athletics, music--where that could be the tipping point between getting in and not getting in. That's where a student who might have an average SAT score or an average high school record, but is a brilliant violin player or a brilliant writer or is a starting quarterback for the football team, that's where you say, "Well, we're going to give the edge to that active person." In the graduate area, of course, there's nothing but academics. You have to have the GRE score, you have to have a good record from a good school. ... Graduate admissions is very simple. Law schools, for example, will use an LSAT score, your college grades and something called a college index. Well, a college index, what's that? Well, you take all the kids from Harvard who took the LSAT--what's the average LSAT for an average Harvard kid? way up here. Take all the kids from "Podunk State" who took the LSAT--what's their average LSAT? way down here. This is simple, simple stuff. By equating the ability of the school's students with their average LSAT, sometimes over a couple of years, you have a near perfect measure of how good that school is. Yes, Harvard has probably the highest average LSAT, or GRE or MCAT, score of any school in the country, and, probably, Podunk State has the worst average test score. So, that's how you make decisions based upon the quality of the college without hurting the college's feelings. We can say, "Look, you know, we know you're a good school, but you have the worst average LSAT score of any school in the country for the past five years. So, we have to downgrade that 'A' average student from your school because they just can't perform." Then, if you're really good in admissions, what you do is, for a high school in the undergraduate area and for a graduate student, you look back, statistically, "How have students from South Brunswick High School done at Rutgers for the past five years? What is their average GPA?" With a big enough "N," with a big enough sample, if you can get some decent data, so, for the one hundred South Brunswick graduates who had this SAT and these grades, [they] got this GPA. So, you do regression analysis. You look at [that], do it in graduate stuff, too, that we know this more anecdotally at the graduate level, because faculty are making the basic decisions, saying, "Well, you know, I've had ten kids from Bryn Mawr over the past ten years. They've all been brilliant." So, you're going to tilt toward that, because the professors know their students well and know where they went to school. So, you do that anecdotally and subjectively at the graduate level. There are some schools you never heard of, and that's where they would call a person like me, saying, "Tell me about this school." You do some research, find out about the school's admission standards, average test scores, and get some kind of a profile to help the professor make a decision. Admissions is very simple, because you're just using basic, basic criteria to try to predict success.

SH: During the expansion under President Gross and the increased attention to research under President Bloustein, was that painless or painful for someone in Admissions?

DT: I think it's painless. In fact, it's good for Admissions, because Rutgers has been getting better and better for the past fifty years. We've maybe had some ups and downs, but I'd bet, if you tracked the average SAT and the average high school ranking class from comparable high schools, or average GRE scores or LSAT scores or GMAT scores, you would see a gradual increase. Part of that is simply luck, and we used to tease each other, admissions directors who take credit for getting more applications or better students, that's hogwash. [laughter] All you've got to do is count the number of noses in the first grade of New Jersey schools--that's your entering class--and so, as the high school population increases, well, guess what? You'll have

more applications. You still have to work and recruit, but, almost in a natural way, applications will increase. Now, as Rutgers got better and better and better, we could be tougher and tougher, because more of the applications were from better students. There was a case, decades ago, where then Trenton State, now the College of New Jersey, with a very bright president, did a very brave thing. They cut their enrollments severely. Now, what happened? "Gee, you know, last year, Joe and Sally and Bill all got into Trenton State. This year, [students are] not getting in." Well, you take, instead of having a thousand students--I'm making this up--you have five hundred. What happens? Your admission standards go up. Ah, then, high schoolers say, "Gee, I want to go to Trenton State, because that's tough to get into. It must be a good school." So, you can play the numbers game in admissions, but we've had a gradual increase and I think all the news at Rutgers has generally been good, been positive. We've had success in academics, athletics. We're a good school, we're a good school.

SH: How did you recruit? Were you part of that recruiting effort?

DT: ... Well, you do it differently in the graduate area than you do in the undergraduate area. In the graduate area, you tend to, as the gang in this building [18 Bishop Place, home of Graduate Admissions] do, make yourself available to students, because it's hard for students to know their way around and they need someone to get an additional interview, "What do you want to study?" or, "What do you want to do? These are the opportunities. These are the different schools," [that] kind of thing. You'll, in the graduate level, go to graduate days at major colleges; we don't do much of that anymore. The best recruiting at the graduate level, for academics, is done by the faculty. If you're a really good department, like history or English, philosophy, there are many, the way you get good graduate students is not by talking to you--you talk to a colleague, saying, "You know, Joe, I've got a student in my class here at Franklin & Marshall who is the best." "I'll send him an application." So, it's done in a very personal way at the graduate level, at least for the arts and sciences. For business MBAs, for law schools, it's very mechanical. It's test scores and rank in class. For schools like the Library School, Social Work, it's a mix of experience, social skills and academics and test scores, but they're different. Undergraduate is pretty much looking at the high school record. Undergraduate admissions is easy because you have a homogeneous population. What do you have? high school students. You have some transfer students, but, basically, high school seniors. Graduate level, you're all over the world, you're all over the lot--you have young, old, mid-career, different disciplines, different requirements.

SH: Were there ever any guidelines given to you that you felt that you did not want to use or did not want to enforce or enact? I assume they would be coming down from the Board of Governors or the administration.

DT: No--fair question. I think one of the challenges and one of the joys of my working here was to challenge faculty or challenge deans and say, "Do you really want this person? Look again." We, when I was doing it, would review every application, not that we were second-guessing faculty, because the faculty were picking, basically, their colleagues, but just to double check, and, invariably, a couple of times a week, we'd get an application that just needed another pair of eyes. We would give it to the dean to look at, usually, saying, "Dean, you want to make sure about this?" and, sometimes, the dean would say, "No way. I'm going to call professor so-and-so and say we can't admit that person." So, it's a good, careful process.

DF: To your knowledge, did Rutgers have, or do they have to this day, any quotas with their admissions?

DT: No. I never recall, in my forty years here, ever hearing about a quota. We're a state university. I think if I were working for a private school, I'd answer that differently. You pay attention to different things as a private school. If you're at Princeton, you would pay attention to money and notoriety and things like that, and we're pretty square. I recall, I'll give you a good example, back in the 1960s, there was a terrific college basketball player, terrific basketball player, who applied to Rutgers and applied to Princeton, got admitted to Princeton. The basketball coach comes storming into our office, Admissions Office, saying, "Princeton took him. You guys going to turn him down?" "Well, we'll check again." We checked, called the high school, checked--couldn't touch him. This kid went to Princeton and played basketball. We couldn't admit him here because his SATs and rank in class were not strong enough. That was one, one small example, probably very rare, [laughter] but it shows you the difference.

SH: When you admit students, I am talking about undergraduate here, because of their prowess on the field or on the court, what does an admissions person have to do to make sure that they can succeed?

DT: Well, I've been out of that for a while, but there is a faculty oversight group. I think the Dean of what was then Rutgers College, Carl Kirschner, chairs that. So, where there is a terrific football prospect who doesn't look like most of the applicants, that's screened separately, but, just in partial defense of the Rutgers football program now, there are 119 Division I schools playing football. Of the 119, the Rutgers' football team ranks seventh or eighth academically across the country. We rank first among state universities. That means that among our peer schools that we're playing, we've got the best record of any state school, and we're up there with the Dukes and Navys and Stanfords, the other schools. Also, since the coach came onboard, five or six years ago, Greg Schiano, not one, *not one*, football player has flunked out. Now, what do you do? Well, you take a risk, but, then, you give them so much tutoring and so much handholding and so much help, because these kids are working three and four hours a day at football, that you, number one, get the kid who's got the character to succeed. There's one kid playing football now who's got a 3.75 in civil engineering. That says something. ... You know, there aren't many schools in the country that have this kind of profile, but we all do it. I think the Athletic Director, Bob Mulcahy, a year ago, said, when questioned about the money we're spending on football, ... basically, "It's not the way it should be. We shouldn't have huge football programs, but everyone is doing it." So, if you want to play peer schools, including the Michigans and some of the great [schools], the Berkeleys, ... Virginia, some of these great state schools, you play the game the same way. So long as people are going to spend millions of dollars to watch the game on TV or to go to a game, you have to play by those rules. Be nice to go back to the 1800s and not have to worry about this, but, sometimes, you accept reality, and I think a state university has got to spend money on a football program. It brings in tons of money from corporate sponsors, money from alumni. It even brings in faculty, because you may have colleagues, but some faculty, when they're applying for grants, all of a sudden, [say], "Rutgers, Rutgers, I know that school. Hey, they've got a great football team. Let me look at that application again." Everything counts. You know, it's just the society we live in, you know.

SH: These programs, in fact, help you, as an admissions counselor, find the good ones.

DT: Right.

DF: How long did you work until at the Admissions Office?

DT: Until 2002. I've been retired for five years.

SH: Do you like being retired?

DT: I love it. I love it. [laughter] I had forty great years. I had great people to work for, work with, but I was ready to retire. I just wanted to do something else, which is not work. I recommend it. [laughter]

SH: Going back, you talked about when there were no longer housemothers. How were those decisions made? Was it just the culture that changed it?

DT: I think it was the culture. I think, ... I wasn't involved in that part of the campus life--that was dean of men's kind of stuff, dean of women's, dean of students, but I think it was something that was happening across the country, with other universities, other colleges, and just the [way it went].

SH: You were involved with your fraternity, I assume.

DT: Not really. Once I graduated, no, I pretty much stayed away from it, yes.

SH: I thought maybe you were part of that alumni group.

DT: No, for a very few years, very early on, but, then, I kind of got out.

DF: Will your class be doing anything special next year for your fiftieth anniversary?

DT: Absolutely. They always have a big [dinner]. It's called the Old Guard. That's a quaint name. We are inducted into the Old Guard, which means that we've been able to live for fifty years after graduation, and they have a great dinner for us and activities like that, a lot of fun. We're just happy to have made it this far. [laughter]

SH: Is there anything that we have not asked you that you would like to put on the record?

DT: I think you have both done a terrific job. You've really gotten me to talk and I like what you're doing and I wish you lots of luck--keep it up.

SH: Thank you. Do you have any questions, David, before I end the interview?

DF: I think that was pretty much it.

SH: Thank you so much.

DT: Thank you, thank you both. You're good interviewers.

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Reviewed by Maria Juliano 5/13/11

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 5/31/11

Reviewed by Donald J. Taylor 6/8/11