

RUTGERS THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH LINDA DALE HOFFA

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

and

AMANDA NYARKO

and

ELLEN WHITE

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

APRIL 7, 2022

TRANSCRIPT BY

JESSE BRADDELL

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an oral history interview with Ms. Linda Dale Hoffa, on April 7, 2022, with Shaun Illingworth. Amanda, why don't you say your name first, and then Ellen?

Amanda Nyarko: Amanda Nyarko.

Ellen White: Ellen White.

SI: Thank you very much for sitting down with us. To begin, can you tell us where and when you were born?

Linda Hoffa: I was born in Camden, New Jersey, on February 5, 1954, at Cooper Hospital.

SI: For the record, can you tell us your parents' names?

LH: My father's name--he passed away a couple years ago--Homer Dale Hoffa, Jr. My mother's maiden name was Nancy Louise Bellshot, and her full name--my parents divorced--at her death, was Nancy Wetterhahn, W-E-T-T-E-R-H-A-H-N. She had remarried.

SI: Well, we usually like to get a little background on your family history, what you might remember. Do you, starting with your mother's side of the family, know anything about the family history, if there is any kind of immigration story there, maybe how they got to Camden, that sort of thing?

LH: It is less clear on my mother's side. I know that the roots are Irish but I think Irish Protestant. The folklore was that the relative who came over had come from somewhat of a prominent or well-to-do family, but he was a ne'er-do-well and had serious gambling debts, so the family sent him to America. I don't know if that's true or not. I don't know the relative's name or how many generations ago it was, but I think that there's Irish and Scottish and English. On my mother's father's side, her parents divorced early in their marriage, I think that's Lithuanian. His name was Bellshot, like "bells hot," B-E-L-L-S-H-O-T, but when he died, my mother found a birth certificate for him and it said Batazodis. I don't even know how to spell Batazodis. The family rumor, or legend, was that he had been a World War I flying ace. He flew, was a fighter pilot. Again, I have no idea whether or not this is true or not, but he was not part of my mother's upbringing. Her mother had married again, and she was raised by a stepfather, whose name was Kunitz.

There were, on my mother's side of the family, a lot of marriages and a lot of divorces as well as widowhood. I think my great grandmother had three marriages. I think my grandmother had three marriages. My mother had two marriages. That was sort of their history. My mother and her mother lived in South Jersey, in Camden County, when my mother was growing up. She grew up in very modest means. I know my mother would not like to share this, but she, because of family circumstances, was not able to complete high school and had to go to work at the age of sixteen. My mother was incredibly beautiful and incredibly bright and was very much a self-made woman who got involved in real estate. She was a leasing agent, when I was growing up, for apartment buildings and things like that. But if you met her, you would always think that she

was educated. She had a terrific vocabulary and was incredibly well spoken and always dressed as a professional businesswoman.

Her great goal in life was for me to get a college education. It was taught to me probably before I even understood two words in the English language as a toddler, but there was no doubt in my mind that somehow I was going to go to college. In her generation, that meant getting a teacher's degree and a teacher's certificate. That meant stability, and teaching was considered to be a great profession. She wanted that for me. She really had no idea about colleges. She wasn't able to advise me about where to go to school or anything like that, but she very much instilled in me how important it was to get a good education and get good grades and get a college education. I'll tell you why I ultimately got a law degree, but that wasn't something my mother was drumming in my head. It was just to get a college education.

On my father's side of the family, he grew up in Haddon Heights, New Jersey, and his father had been in World War I. I think he was affected by that. I think, as you get older, you find out there are a lot of family secrets, and you don't always get all the information or all the knowledge that you want. My father was the younger child and only son in his family. His father was (obviously) Homer Dale Hoffa, Sr. My father was Homer Dale Hoffa, Jr. Homer Dale Hoffa, Sr. had a very serious alcohol problem, and so that caused for a dysfunctional family when my father was growing up. His mother had to support the family. I think they had a garden in the backyard in Haddon Heights, where they basically produced all the vegetables that they needed. My father's mother worked at Lit Brothers, in the basement, as a saleswoman. That was a large department store in Philadelphia. I think that she suffered a great deal in the marriage because of all the pressures and responsibilities that were on her, and ultimately, she committed suicide and I don't know why, but that was something that was hidden from me until I was an adult.

I think that he [my father] came from a family of education and means. I'm a ninth-generation American. My aunt Peg [my father's sister] was in the Daughters of the American Revolution, and before the internet, my aunt had gone to all the archives in Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia and found, I think, at least two relatives who had fought in the American Revolution. I'm told that the first ancestor came to Philadelphia in 1730-something, 1732 maybe, and so they were farmers, stonemasons, but mostly farmers, and I think they went as far as Berks County, Pennsylvania. I think there are a number of Hoffas, but it's clear that they came from Germany. I'm told a Lutheran congregation came over to America for religious freedom, and they came over from Germany in the 1730s.

My father and mother met at a church dance. My father was Methodist. My mother was Methodist. My mother said that he knew her religion before he knew her name, and they met when they were quite young. I don't know if my mother was fifteen or something like that when they met and I think they got married when my mother was nineteen. Did I put the marriage date down? I'm not sure. They got married right after World War II.

SI: You put down that your father was an Army veteran. Did he serve during World War II?

LH: He was. My father was six-foot-eight, and he knew he was going to get drafted for World War II. He tried to enlist in the Air Force, and they said, "You're too tall." He tried to go into

the Navy, and they said, "You're too tall." Apparently, he couldn't fit in a plane, and he couldn't fit in a Navy submarine or something like that or a ship. I don't know. This is what I'm told. Whether this is true or not, I don't know, but this is what I was told. Ultimately, he went into the Army. I think he rose to the rank of sergeant. He was trained; he was going to fight in the Pacific Theater, with regard to the ongoing war against Japan. Because the nuclear bombs were detonated, that ended the war that they thought was going to take a lot longer, so my father was never deployed.

SI: They met and married, and I know you also have a sister. Is she older or younger than you?

LH: Older. She'll pretend she's younger, but she's not. She is sixteen months older than I am, by two grades, and she never lets me forget that there are two grades difference. She lives in California. She went to Rutgers-Camden as a commuter, and when she graduated, she did get a teaching certificate. [She] got a job for a year in Florida to teach. My parents were separated when I was ten and divorced a couple years after that. My father ultimately relocated to Florida with a new wife and a new family, and I think he helped her [my sister] find that job down there. She taught, I don't know, a year or two, met a man, an engineer, and together, they married, and they went out west. I think they went to California, but they also went to Alaska because the pipeline was there, and the pay was very good. They went up there and saved up money, bought a house. They divorced a couple years later, and then, ultimately, Susan married her current husband. She did not have any children of her own but did adopt, at age forty-eight, a terrific baby from Russia who is now graduating from the University of Wisconsin and is an extraordinarily accomplished ballerina. My sister is retired, as is her husband. They retired early, and they have a beautiful home in Pebble Beach, California.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your earliest memories, what your neighborhood was like. It was in Camden. Is that correct?

LH: I was born in Camden. That's where the hospital is. Back in those days, they didn't really have regional hospitals, and I used to say to my mother--when I first became an attorney and it's before the internet--there's a very important book called *Hubbell-Martindale*. I don't think it's a big deal now, but that's how you found lawyers. They would always put where you went to college, where you went to law school, when you graduated, what bars you're admitted to, but they would put your date of birth and where you were born. I would say to my mother, "You couldn't go across the Ben Franklin Bridge and give birth in Philadelphia? You had to give birth in Camden, Mom!" [laughter] But Camden, back in the day, was a vibrant city. [Editor's Note: Martindale-Hubbell is an information services company to the legal profession that started in 1868. The company publishes the *Martindale-Hubbell Directory*, which gives background information on lawyers and law firms.]

When they got married, they originally lived in Collingswood with my father's sister. This is after my grandmother [my father's mother] had passed, so I never knew my grandmother on my father's side. They lived in a little house on Collings Avenue in Collingswood, and then they bought a house in Maple Shade, NJ. It was, I don't know, ten thousand dollars, a little rancher, twelve thousand dollars, something like that. It was a neighborhood that I lived in until, I think, I was four or five, and my memory--it would look like a little Levittown that was built, all by the

cookie-cutter little rancher houses, which are now all very hip because they're mid-century. [laughter] Back then, they were real cute starter homes. From photographs--and you'd always remember, "Do you remember this from your memory, or do you remember this because you see these scenes from your childhood in photographs or what you're told?" It was a neighborhood where everybody was in their twenties, married couples, they had one car, and all the wives were at home with the kids, and there was a neighborhood just full of kids, which was really a great place. My husband grew up in Levittown, Pennsylvania, and that's his recollection of his neighborhood growing up. [Editor's Note: Levittown is a term used to describe suburban areas that were established in the 1950s with similar mass-produced homes. The name is owed to William Levitt, whose "Levittowns" in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania embodied suburban life in the 1950s.]

We moved when [I was] five. My mother was a mover and a shaker, "Let's get going. Let's keep going and moving forward and improving our lot in life." We moved to Haddon Township, New Jersey, because she believed it would have a better school system for us. I was furious. I was five years old. It was a two-story house we moved to, and I had to go up the stairs and I didn't want to go up the stairs. I thought it was ridiculous to have to go upstairs. I wanted my rancher. I was like--again, this is what they tell me--I'm crying at the bottom of the stairs because I don't want to go up the stairs because this is ridiculous. Another memory I have of growing up--again, it's probably from a photograph--is to entertain us, you took the garden hose and we all ran around in our little cotton panties at age three, four or whatever, and we all ran through the hose, or they filled up the literally tin bucket and we stuck our butts in the bucket and we'd pull ourselves out. That was a great deal of fun, and then they'd throw the bucket of water over our heads. Those are sort of the few memories. I have one other memory. Again, it's probably folklore, but my sister decided she was going to run away from home. My mother helped her pack. She packed two undershirts, two underpants, two pairs of socks, maybe two shirts, and put it in her little kiddie suitcase, and my mother said, "All right, goodbye." She left and went out the door. Maybe she's five. A couple minutes later, she comes back, and my mother said to her, "What happened?" She said, "I'm not allowed to cross the street." [laughter] I love that story.

SI: Amanda, do you have a question?

AN: I do. Please correct me if I am wrong, you just said that you moved to Haddon Heights, New Jersey.

LH: Haddon Township. Oh, I'm sorry, my father came from Haddon Heights. There are a lot of Haddons in South Jersey, Haddon Heights, Haddonfield, Haddon Township. My father comes from Haddon Heights. When we left Maple Shade, we moved to Haddon Township. Now, ultimately, my mother moved to Haddonfield in her second marriage, which is the fancy town.

AN: As far as Haddon Township, I really want to know more what you can remember from that neighborhood. You have some great stories in familial settings, about going upstairs and things like that, and you said you did not see the rancher-style home anymore. Was it all just a completely different environment as far as you saw?

LH: The part of Haddon Township was called Westmont, and there's Haddon Avenue that runs down, and we were a block and a half down from Haddon Avenue. Haddon Avenue would be the area that had all the stores. It had a little gift shop. It had a little candy store. It had a movie theater and things like that. These were the days that they had still little downtowns in the old suburban communities that were built probably in the '20s and the '30s. The house, you walked in and, immediately, you were in the living room, and at the back wall is a staircase that went up to the second floor. The kitchen, which was small, also had a staircase in it that met at a landing and went straight up then to the second floor. On the second floor, there were three bedrooms and one bathroom. On the first floor, there were no bathrooms. On one side of it, it had an outdoor patio, side patio, not enclosed, and it had huge bushes on the front of the house, which I remember. Ultimately, they were removed. I don't know if they were removed by us or another owner.

It was a street with sidewalks, and it was in a Catholic community. I think I mentioned that my parents were Methodists, and we were raised Methodists. My father was very devout, and we spent a great deal of time, there was Sunday school and there was church every Sunday. I mention that it's a Catholic neighborhood because a big memory of the neighborhood is that the Catholic kids all went to Holy Savior, which was half a block down the other street, and that the Catholic kids were told not to play with us, who were the public kids, which meant we went to the public school, which was a block and a half the other way, which was wonderful. I mean, we could walk a block and a half to school. All the kids were out all day long. Back in the day, you were told, "Get out of the house and go play." For my generation, when I raised my children, it was, "Oh, you have to arrange playdates," and, "Where's the adult supervision?" At age four or five, we were just running the streets, but we're running in the streets of a little suburban neighborhood where all the moms were out. I think my mom was one of the only working moms. At the time, when I was five, she went back to work and became a leasing agent for some luxury high-rise buildings that were built in South Jersey. All the other moms, they all knew you; they would tell you to knock it off or do what you had to do, so you felt like you were under adult supervision. Any adult was able to tell you what the heck to do. Today, that's not true. You're not allowed to police other people's children, but back then, they did. There was one other Methodist family down the street; that was the Johnsons. They had four kids, and we played with them. I didn't really know the kids that went to Holy Savior. We weren't part of the gang of those kids with whom I went to school. As soon as we moved there, I was in kindergarten. I did get to know the other kids in the neighborhood, and my memory is that as soon as it was warm, we would go out and play kickball all night. We would all ride our bikes, and we would all play in other people's yards.

One of my greatest memories is of my father playing--two things he would do--with all the kids in the neighborhood. Remember I mentioned my father was six-foot-eight, and my father had a big personality. He was a salesman kind of personality, "Hello, how you doing? Great to see you," kind of personality and, like my mother, incredibly handsome. My mother was very good looking. My father was a very handsome man, sort of looked like Johnny Carson in his heyday. My father, when he would come home from work, all the kids would run up to him and ask him to play monster. Sometimes, he was too tired. Oh, we would beg him. We would scream for him to play monster, "Oh, please play monster. Please play monster." "Okay," he'd say. The monster was this full plastic mask that he would put on and it had a gouged-out eye and the crazy

teeth, a really scary thing. Remember I had mentioned that we had very large bushes in the front of the house? We would all line up, and he would play monster [makes growling sounds], but he would grab the kids and he would swing them. Now, imagine being swung by a guy who's almost seven feet tall. You're just flying through the air and you're this tiny little munchkin, and it was tremendous fun, tremendous fun. There were no video games back then. There weren't movies on VCRs. Maybe we got *The Flintstones* one night a week at seven-thirty on one of the networks, but other than that, we had to make our own fun. We were truly terrified [when he played monster]. We knew it was my father, but we also knew he was a monster when he put the mask on and we were terrified.

One day, we asked him to do it. "Okay," he says, "I'm going to go in, change my clothes. I'm coming out." We decide, "Well, he's a monster!" We all hid in the Johnson's basement, which is across the street, four houses down, and we hid, I don't know, we thought for hours. He never found us. Well, he wasn't going to come to the Johnson's basement and look for us, but we thought he could because he was a monster. We came out, we said, "Why didn't you come play with us?" He said, "I came out, and you weren't there." We said, "Yes, we were hiding," like we're idiots! [laughter] He would just swing us over those bushes, and we felt like we were coming up to the second floor of the house, as he would swing us around, and we would all scream like we were at Seven Flags on the scariest roller-coaster.

The other thing he did--I don't know what kind of car he had, a 1950s something, but he could put the back seat down. It was called a rumble seat. We could stand up in the back seat. We could stand up. We would all stand up, and he would drive down the road like this [makes motion of a car swerving]. We'd all be swinging in the car wildly. That was also great entertainment that we would have on this little suburban street where there was no traffic. Those are the memories.

SI: You put down that your father was a small-business owner. Was the business in town?

LH: Well, ultimately, he became a small-business owner. I had a little problem with the PDF form filling things in because when I would say, "Small-business owner," it would replicate from what I had in my mother's occupations. So, I decided that was the most generic. My dad, during my parents' marriage, was an insurance salesman. Before that, he was a Bond Bread [delivery person]. Bond Bread, it was like Wonder Bread. It was a huge bakery. Back in the day, the moms stayed at home, and the moms didn't have a car. Everybody had one car. This is like the '50s, the early '60s. There were bread delivery men, and they were men. They didn't have women do that job. My dad delivered bread, but they wouldn't only deliver bread. They would deliver cinnamon buns and things that would look like Entenmann's or whatever, donuts or whatever; they would have a tray. He would come and deliver the bread to all the moms. Then he became a manager, and then he wore a suit and became an insurance salesman. As I said, when we moved to Westmont, NJ my mom got a job as a leasing agent of a high-rise building that was built in Pennsauken. Right outside of Philadelphia, they built two large high-rise buildings, and she became a leasing agent. She did that while we lived in Westmont.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about your early education? You mentioned it was very close to your house, the first school you went to. What did you think of the teachers, and did you have a favorite subject, that kind of thing?

LH: I lived in Westmont until my parents split when I was ten. Strawbridge School was half a block and a block down, and it was a wonderful school. Strawbridge Elementary School was a lovely school. I started there in kindergarten, and one of my report cards I found recently, the teacher--I think she was prescient--she wrote, "Linda is a very good student. She's doing very well, works very hard, but she's a bit of a perfectionist." [laughter] I thought, "Ooh, ooh." They realized that that early, because I'm a trial attorney, and a trial attorney, it's prepare, prepare, prepare, and do your best because you're on when you're in the courtroom.

Anyway, it was a lovely school. The teachers were loving and kind. I do remember that I had one scary teacher in second grade. Her name was Mrs. Lappin. I think she was tough, but I don't know that she was unfair in any respect. She frightened us because she wore what was back in the day called orthopedic shoes. Those were big black shoes that were scary looking to us little children, but we survived second grade, went to third grade, had a wonderful teacher. I think it was Mrs. Dilly. We just loved her. We loved her so much that we never said, "Mrs. Dilly is silly." That's how much we loved her. Then, we came into school [for] fourth grade, and we got Mrs. Lappin again, which we thought was against the laws of nature. "No, you get a teacher for one year. You cannot get a teacher a second year. That's not the law. That's not how things are to be." Mrs. Lappin came back [to our] class and said, "I liked you all so much, I asked for you again." It was really frightening, but I got along with her. I was a good kid. I remember going to school early to water the plants, wash the chalkboard and things like that. I also remember how time slowly went, because school ended at three-fifteen, and we would just sit there and look at the clock. I just couldn't believe how slowly, how long, how unending a minute was before the bell would go. I remember playground time. Recess time was a lot of fun. It was just an asphalt yard, but, by golly, we had fun.

The other thing I remember--something that I was very proud of--my father with the big, big personality, he was president of the Dad's Association. The PTA, the Parent-Teacher Association, may have been run by women. I don't really even know if we had a PTA, but the Dad's Association, in my memory, was the be-all and the end-all. My dad, with the big personality, became the president, which meant that the schoolyard fair in the spring, he ran. It would have all the booths and the games and a little carnival to raise money for the school. That meant I got to work behind in the booths, because my daddy was in charge. I loved that, and it was as big to me as Christmas. One year, I woke up, and it was the [day of the] schoolyard fair. I couldn't have been more excited. I went to the mirror, and I had the measles! To me, it was the end of the world. I probably was a little dramatic. I remember crying, "Please don't be sick," because it's not like the schoolyard fair was going to wait for me to get over the measles. That was one of my childhood traumas. I got the measles the day of the schoolyard fair. That's what I remember, but I left the school in fifth grade.

SI: Amanda, go ahead.

AN: Going on to the next school, I would love to hear about it. It seems like you had an early investment in extra-curriculars, especially with your father on the Dad's Association. Do you remember anything going forward, either in your elementary school experience or middle school, when you moved?

LH: What happened the week before fifth grade started, my mother put us in a car and said, "I'm leaving your father." That was an extremely--as it will be for anybody when their parents separate--an extremely traumatic experience, but it was so unexpected because my parents had never fought. Whatever the issues were in their marriage, my sister and I were completely clueless. We'd be like you think everything's great, and everything's happy. I think the extra-curriculars you mentioned, I do remember helping out. I do remember wanting to be a good girl. I do remember the report card saying I was a perfectionist, but I don't remember being a remarkable student until that point. When my parents separated, that's when I became a straight-A student, and maybe I should've looked back at those report cards. Maybe they were very good grades; I don't remember. In my memory, after my parents separated, I became very serious. I became very serious, I think, because of the effect of the divorce, and I think this may be typical. Kids have maybe generally two responses. One is to be extremely angry and to act out, and the other one is to be the peacemaker or to be the very good child because you want to make sure that everything is okay going forward. I did not want to add any burden to my mother, because now she was a single mom. She's raising two kids. She's just a leasing agent. It's like a secretary. It's like an administrative position. Money was very limited. Financially, we were insecure, and I wanted to make things easy for my mother and in part because my sister took the opposite route, which is she was very angry about it. She was older, and maybe it affected her more. I also think it affected her because I was lucky; I was going into fifth grade and where we moved, Pennsauken, is not a good school system. It's probably just a cut above Camden. Haddon Township had a good school system, but I went to an elementary school in Pennsauken and I don't remember the name of it, but it was good. I had good teachers. I had fabulous teachers there as well. I think the quality of my education for fifth and sixth grade did not change that much, but for my sister, she went to middle school. I think middle school is really tough for most kids, and to go to a new school and to go to a tougher school, I think she was sort of suffering in silence.

At that point, I was only ten, but I thought of myself as like a mini-adult. I didn't think I was a child anymore. I felt like I had put my childhood aside. I had put my dolls aside. That was the point where I became a more serious student, and I do remember that at that point I just got all straight-A's. That was easy for me for fifth and sixth grade, for education purposes, but in seventh grade, I went to a junior high school and it was a shocker. The teachers weren't teaching anymore, and discipline was the whole key, the whole issue. I was anxious to go to school. I was anxious. Even though I was always--I'm six-foot-one--even though I was always a very tall kid, I didn't want to get in any fights with anybody. But I was communicative. I told my mother what was going on. My mother went into the school to talk to them about it. She wanted the other children disciplined, and the vice principal--every school has someone called a vice principal, I don't know what it's called, but he's basically the vice principal of discipline--that teacher just laid it out for my mother and said, "If you have any money, you'd better move." Since we lived in an apartment, my mother moved us to Cherry Hill [NJ] the next year, but that was not good for me because I couldn't catch up. Just that year, I was already behind. They put

me in all the honors classes, but the kids had had pre-algebra the year before. I just couldn't catch up in math and science, and so that was a very difficult year for me transition-wise.

The next year, we moved back to Haddon Township, and again, they put me in the honor classes. I really didn't have the foundation because I was like a year behind. The kids in Cherry Hill and Haddon Township, if they were in honors, they were a year ahead in math. They just were simply a year ahead in math than what I had been in, in Pennsauken. My mom couldn't help me, and my mom didn't know about getting tutors. The school didn't give me tutors or anything like that. They put me a year ahead in math with the tenth graders when I was in ninth grade in Haddon Township, but the regular math program [and not the honor's program]. So, that worked. That was then a good fit for me, when I went in. But what was hard for me is that I was in a different school in fourth grade and then I go to a different school in fifth grade. I go to this middle school that was a completely different experience in seventh grade. I go to a different middle school in eighth grade. Then, in ninth grade, in high school, then I'm in the same high school program through my senior year, and that was a better fit. I do think it was hard for me, at least in the math and sciences, because I didn't get the kind of education that I needed starting in seventh grade. I did okay [however].

When I went to Rutgers College, I took calculus in a class at the Engineering School of one hundred men and two women, and the other woman was in her thirties. She had gone back to college. I did "ace" calculus, but it was only because I had a boyfriend who was a physics genius and he tutored me through the whole thing. My point is, I needed some remedial catchup, and once these things could be taught to me, I could understand them; I could learn them. I didn't feel that the schools were good at trying to provide any kind of catch-up that people need. I think when people do start college or any kind of serious educational program, where they are not coming from one of the more advanced or better schools, there really does need to be a need to make sure everybody's got the fundamentals that they need.

SI: In all these schools, it sounds like there is a lot of social disruption, as well as education. Did you find that there was any place that you could find an outlet like a club or a sport or maybe a teacher who helped you out?

LH: That's a great question. It was the church. I had a very good youth group at church, and we had a good youth director. I found friendships through my Methodist Church in Westmont, New Jersey. I became sort of a leader at my Methodist Youth Fellowship, and I also got very busy, busy, busy in school. I joined, [in] my freshman year, the hockey team and I joined the basketball team and I joined the tennis team. Well, I had never picked up a racket [before]. We didn't belong to any country club, so I didn't know how to play tennis, and basketball, I mean, I was probably six-one, but I stopped measuring myself at five-eleven and three-quarter! I was certainly one of the tallest girls in all of South Jersey back in the late 1960s. I just never saw a girl my age that was as tall as I was, and I was skinny. Basketball is something you've got to learn, like anything. You've got to know how to dribble. You've got to be comfortable with the ball. You've got to know how to shoot. It's not like they hand it to you, and you know what the heck you're doing. Basketball is you just get out there and you're dribbling and you're shooting and you're dribbling and shooting; you learn this stuff. People might have some basic coordination skills like that, but they've still got to play it. Well, they didn't have Title IX back

then. Please let us loop back to Title IX because I will tell you how through Rutgers College and Title IX, I ultimately met my husband, which I think is a great story. Let's go back to Title IX. It didn't go into place until 1976, I think, 1975. They weren't doing anything in this little South Jersey high school for that. [Editor's Note: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in education programs that receive federal financial assistance. Title IX Regulations went into effect in July 1975.]

They had tryouts in basketball, and I try out for the team. How could I not make it? I'm literally a foot taller than everybody else. I am so bad at it that I make the second-string freshman team at a teeny tiny high school in South Jersey. [laughter] They thought, "We can't cut her because, at some point, she could just hold the ball over her head." The other thing you might not know--and I don't know, Ellen or Amanda, if you played basketball--but back then, they had different rules for girls. Girls' basketball had a team of six. They had two rovers, two forwards, two guards. If you were a forward, you couldn't pass over [the center line]. You'd be in the other zone, but you couldn't go back over the center line. The guards couldn't cross over the center line, only the rovers could, and--you may not know this rule--you could only dribble three times before you had to pass the ball. That's a stupid game. I really thought it was a stupid game. What are they going to do with a girl that can't hold the ball because she never held the ball because I didn't have any brothers, and my dad didn't play basketball with me? They say, "You stand under the basket, and you wave your arms." Now, if you are the tallest girl--maybe one of the tallest girls in South Jersey--and they've now put you in ankle-high sneakers that really are not flattering, do you want to stand there and wave your arms over your head calling attention to yourself? I really didn't like it, but thank God, the next year, they got a swim team, and swimming I liked.

I become a captain of the swim team. I become the most valuable player two years running, and I'm telling you, we were the worst swim team in all of South Jersey, but it didn't matter. I was a very big fish in a very tiny pond. I was very happy, and that was the end of my basketball career. I played hockey for a couple years. Then, I became [a member of the] color guard. Do you remember what color guard is, in front of the band? That was a varsity letter. It was so easy to get that varsity letter. I said, "I'll do that." Swimming is a real long season, so I did swimming. I really was not good at tennis, so I think I gave up tennis after a couple years.

The question you asked me is did I become active, and how did I sort of cope socially? I became very active. I participated in a lot of clubs. I can't remember what they were. I got in the National Honors Society. I can't even remember, but I just became very, very busy and very busy in my youth group and in charity functions that we did through the youth group, and schoolwork. I had a nice group of friends, and I did not get boy crazy. I don't think any girl should get boy crazy in high school.

SI: Ellen, you have a question, and then Amanda.

EW: You seemed to be doing a lot in your high school years, and I was wondering, since you grew up in the '60s, if you remembered what was happening with the civil rights movement. Do you remember any of that? Were you attuned to what was happening?

LH: Yes, we did. I mean, very much like the Ukrainian War now, it is very present and we see photographs and we see films as though it is happening around the corner. The Vietnam War was the first war that was shown on television, and in fact, it was in color. While I was not politically active in high school, I was very much aware about the Vietnam War. We were very aware of the draft and who could be drafted and how young men were trying to avoid the draft. I was very much against the war, but I did not protest. I think I was a little bit young for that. I graduated high school in 1972, and so the real big protests were '68 and '69. That's when I'm like a freshman in high school. My husband graduated, I think, in '69, so there was more political activism for him when he was in high school. I didn't do that but personally felt that the war was extremely wrong.

One of the great things that happened to me as a child is that I got a scholarship to go and be an exchange student to Holland in 1971, and that was for the summer. Although, to me, in many ways, it was [only] three months, but it could've been a full year, which is a remarkable experience to go to Europe and to live with another family. There I am in Holland, and the Vietnam War is raging. The Europeans were extremely critical of the war. I feel like I'm a little ambassador for America, I shouldn't be critical of my government, and yet I didn't agree with it. Nixon is president. I didn't like Nixon. My senior year, I did go door to door and campaign for McGovern. We got to vote at age eighteen, and I [had] just turned eighteen when I could do that. It was eye-opening to me to go door to door to find out how uninformed people were, how important an election was, how important it was to be involved as a citizen. I think going to Europe and seeing this different perspective and the criticism of the United States government outside was very eye-opening and enlightening to me and did make me want to become more politically active. [Editor's Note: George McGovern was a Democratic Party politician who served as a U.S. Senator from South Dakota from 1963 to 1981. In the presidential election of 1972, McGovern ran against incumbent President Richard Nixon and lost in one of the largest landslides in U.S. history. On July 1, 1971, the 26th Amendment was ratified, which changed the legal voting age from twenty-one to eighteen years old.]

When I came home, I thought that I would study political science, and I thought that I would be interested in the Foreign Service, something like that, or some kind of international work. I wanted to do that, but as far as protesting goes, no. There was nothing radical about me. There was also not, at my high school level, any awareness, on my part, of the women's movement. I didn't even have a vocabulary to articulate women's rights. Going door to door, knocking on these houses to get people registered to vote and asking them to vote for McGovern, I will always remember a housewife who answered the door. I asked her how she's going to vote, and she said, "I don't know; my husband hasn't told me yet." I was only eighteen, and I sort of reached out towards her, "Oh, no, no, no. No, no, no. You can decide. You get to do this." [laughter] I was so shocked by it, for someone telling me that she was waiting to be told what to do.

SI: Amanda, do you have a question?

AN: I do. Actually encompassing exactly what you talked about and also what we just talked about as far as clubs and extra-curriculars, when you were applying to universities at that time, what was that experience like and how well you can remember it? I know you said your mom

had a heavy emphasis on college education. Do you remember that process being stressful? Did you think Rutgers was one of many options, one of few options?

LH: Well, first of all, I had no idea what I was doing, none, zero, zip. I had no family members that I could talk to who had gone to college who could give me advice. Going to Haddon Township, which is a Camden County small high school, the graduating class was about 250. We had guidance counselors, and the guidance counselors were pushing everybody to go to small colleges in Pennsylvania, Muhlenberg, Gettysburg, Ursinus--I don't know, all these small colleges--La Salle, just colleges that are all in Pennsylvania. They were pushing for that, but I remember the expensive price tag back then for colleges was five thousand dollars. Well, today, it's eighty thousand dollars. It might have well been eighty thousand dollars because my mother wasn't making any money. I had a conversation with my mother, "Okay, Ma, you said I'm always going to go to college. I'm ready to go to college now. I got all my A's and everything like that, and I'm ready to go. What do you think, and how are we going to pay for this?" My mother's like, "Well, I'm not going to pay for it. They're going to have to give you money." [laughter] I was like, "What?" There was no plan. There was no plan for this whatsoever. I had no concept of money. I had no concept that I could have borrowed money or done anything like that.

There was also another problem. I filled out the financial aid applications. Ultimately, the man I married, he's a college administrator, and he started his college administration [work] in financial aid. He sort of explained these facts to me that I wasn't aware of at the time and only learned later. I go and I write down my father's address; I write down my mother's [address] and everything like that. Well, remember, my father had remarried, and he had relocated to Florida. He had adopted his second wife's three sons, so basically [he] has a new family. You were asking if he's a small businessman. Before he went to Florida, after my parents divorced, he bought an ice cream store, a Carvels, in Westmont, New Jersey. Then, he sold that. He moved to Florida when he remarried, and he started a pool maintenance business down there. That's how he became a small businessman. I learned later, he never filled out the financial aid applications; he just ignored them. Since I had an incomplete application, I wasn't getting any financial aid whatsoever. This is a disaster, and I'm completely unaware of the disaster, completely uninformed. I don't even know that I should be following up and no one's communicating with me from any of the schools about the fact that my [financial aid] application was incomplete. My father offered no financial support when he moved down to Florida. He basically discontinued any support, not that the support had been significant before. What my husband informed me about later is, "That doesn't matter." The fact that I have a father, the fact that he had a business, I wouldn't have qualified for financial aid, even though he would not contribute to the financial cost of college. That's a real conundrum, and apparently, you have to declare yourself independent or something, emancipated, I don't know. None of this I knew, was aware of, or would have done.

Then came Rutgers College. I'm getting into the colleges that I applied to, and when I looked at the colleges I applied to, they really show you that I didn't quite know what I was doing. In South Jersey, everybody also applies to the University of Delaware. I applied to Gettysburg. I applied to University of Delaware. I applied to Rutgers College. I can't remember--oh, William & Mary, I think, was one. I don't think any of these schools make a great deal of sense. There's

no consistency there or anything. William & Mary was an attractive school because they were 3,500 dollars instead of 5,000 dollars, I think, and so a lot of kids in my school would apply there too.

Rutgers College comes in and saves the day because they invited me to be considered for something called the Presidential Scholarship. They said, "We would like to meet you, and we invite you to come for a weekend." They took their top--they told me this, and I hope my memory is correct--their top one hundred scholarship applicants, and they invited us down for a weekend. This was fabulous. I had never been on a college campus. It was a college of all men [at the time]. They were very excited to meet the few women that had shown up. It was a handful of us, with regard to these scholarship applicants. I don't know, maybe there were fifty of us. It was a very welcoming, exciting and fabulous weekend of a series of interviews and a series of intensive tours, where they're showing us everything. I fall in love with Rutgers College, and luckily, Rutgers College fell in love with me because I got one of the two Presidential Scholarships, which was a huge honor. Basically, they didn't worry about my financial need. I had financial need. I had no money, but I wasn't going to be viewed that way because of the circumstances that I explained to you. They looked at me, and I got a full ride at Rutgers College. I got [even] money for my books.

Then, when I became a preceptor, a residence counselor, whatever that's called--they called them preceptors back then--they were giving me money at the end of the year, like pocket change, because it was paying for my dorm or whatever. I was extremely lucky, I think, that that worked for me, because, honestly, I don't know what the heck I was going to do. I did not know what I was doing, we were not able to pay, and my mother was just like, "Oh, you'll get a scholarship," but she didn't know. [laughter] It worked out. I went to Rutgers College on a full academic scholarship, and it was an absolute blessing.

It was so great, Rutgers College would send two students a year to the University of Glasgow. This is before they had junior year abroad programs, but they literally had an exchange program, two came from Glasgow and two from New Brunswick would go over. I got that, and they gave me this money to go live in Europe for a year, which no scholarship money does that. That was an extraordinary gift.

SI: Before we get deeper into Rutgers, that reminds me, I want to go back and ask about that summer in Holland. Tell us a little more about that, what you did, what the experience was like.

LH: It was fabulous. It was wonderful. Now, I still have a little notebook, a scrap notebook, and I'm not a scrap-notebook keeper, but I've got this one. It's got the application, and we've got the typewriter on it with the little whiteout over it, a crossover, of their description of their family. It was American Field Service--AFS it was called--and they took one person from our high school, and this group of parents, or whatever, raised money to help fund me. The [Dutch] family, it was such a wonderful match, and it was completely different from my family. It was a big family. I grew up with a single mom, one sister; we're living in apartments. I go to this [Dutch] family. He is a train station master, and he lives above the train station, [laughter] in this little town where they have two windmills. [laughter] You ride your bike to the bakery every day to get your fresh bread, and it is across the canal. It is fifteen kilometers from Germany. It

is not Amsterdam. If you've been to Holland, it is not Amsterdam. It is old-time little Holland. The church we went to was seven hundred years old, and the farmers would go to church in their wooden shoes, oh yes, and they would take their shoes off and go in in their socks inside the church, yep, yep. When my Dutch sister would ride with me on the bike, I had to run across, because she's peddling, and jump from the back seat of the bike, and then she would peddle me off to church. I would sit there, and all I understood was "*Jezus Christus*, amen." That was like the only part I understood in Dutch. The family, I had six [Dutch] sisters and one [Dutch] brother. Six sisters and one brother, and they took me on! I was their seventh daughter, and to this day--okay. Can we take a break now?

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: You were just telling us a little bit about the family in the Netherlands.

LH: My Dutch father was the station master. My Dutch mother, *moeder*, was a homemaker and just the most loving person you could just imagine, and they had wonderful senses of humor. They liked to play games. They liked to tease each other. I didn't grow up in a household where we were good teasers or learned how to take teasing, but this was a jolly household. They liked to play games, and they had a lot of fun.

As young people, [my Dutch parents] had survived World War II. As you know, the Nazis, Germany, had taken over Holland very early in World War II, and they had to live under German occupation. My Dutch father was a young man, and he knew that probably since he worked for the Dutch railroad, that they would force him to work for their railroad system. He'd get out on a family member's farm and literally had dug--I don't want to say a grave, but a hole in the ground that he could pull--I don't know what it was--over himself, some kind of maybe a door or something, but he would hide literally underground. Because Holland is so flat, if the Germans were coming, he was able to see them miles and miles away, and he could hide from them. Otherwise, he worked on the family farm. I think that she [my Dutch mother] had worked as a nurse or nurse's aide during World War II.

After the war, they wanted to have a big family, and they wanted to have a son, and they had a daughter and another daughter and another daughter. They had six daughters. They finally got a son, and when they got the son, the whole town came out and celebrated. [laughter] They all came out and celebrated that Maarten was born.

When I came to live with them in 1971, their children were out of the house, except for Jeanne, Frieda and Maarten, the boy. They had three kids home. The station house, we lived on top of the train station. They gave me a lovely bedroom, and the kids all lived in like a big attic, with little built-out bedrooms up there. In the middle of the attic was a swing, and we could all swing in the middle of the attic, which was wonderful. [Editor's Note: Ms. Hoffa's telephone rings.] Can we take a break just for a second?

[TAPE PAUSED]

LH: Are we recording?

SI: Yes.

LH: Okay, good. Let's see, what was I saying?

SI: You were talking about the swing they had up in the attic.

LH: Oh, yes, they had a swing upstairs. It was wild. My point is, they were fun. They were fun, and it was really a good fit because at that time in my life, I was a devout Christian. They were devout Christians, and it really was a very, very good fit. What made it so wonderful for me? Not just being in Europe, not just being in a different country learning another language; it was being part of a big family. They had one daughter who had spent a year in the U.S. Midwest, and so they wanted to give back to the organization [American Field Service] and then take me on for a summer.

In any event, it's 2022, and that was 1971. That's a few years ago, and I stay in touch with them. Now, *Moeder* and *Vadar* have passed. The sister that I was paired with sadly passed away very young in her forties. Another sister just passed away, but the other ones I stay in touch with. I go every so often, and I recruit the next generation to come and visit me. My children have become friends with their children. We went to Paris a couple years ago, and one of my Dutch nephews and his business partner went out and visited us in Paris, you know, jumped in a car to just see us! There are these intergenerational connections, and I adore them. I just adore them. So, I continue to recruit them, and they always say to me, "How are we related?" "I'm your American aunt. I'm your American great aunt," and they say, "And how long did you live in Holland?" I say, "Oh, just three months." But to me, it was like a lifetime, just wonderful.

SI: You also mentioned that you got active in the McGovern campaign. How did that come about?

LH: I did not want Nixon; I really didn't. I don't remember how it came about, but I do remember going door-to-door. I don't remember how I was recruited or anything like that, but I very much wanted McGovern to win that election. I did whatever I could do, and that was going door-to-door and handing out pamphlets.

SI: Ellen, go ahead.

EW: I am going to go back to Rutgers, where we talked last about your transition period entering Rutgers College and having a fabulous weekend. At this point, you said you had fallen in love with Rutgers. Do you remember what that first fall was like? Do you remember where you lived and anything like that, moving in?

LH: I lived in the Quadrangle. I lived in Hegeman Hall--I think it was called--and I think my room number was 411, but I could be wrong on that. The roommate that I got was the roommate that I had during that weekend selection process. She was my roommate and I said, "Let's be roommates again," and she was fabulous. Her name is Phyllis Hawkins. Our little section, three

floors, I think, two or three floors, was all women, but the Quad was intermingled, you know, male and female. That was terrific.

The next year, I was in Frelinghuysen. I became a preceptor, which was a little crazy to do that my sophomore year, but they needed women. That was crazy. I had fifty-some students, guys on one hallway, gals on the other hallway, and the guys were nuts. They were throwing furniture off the balcony. I felt like I was in charge of a frat house. Years later, years, years later, on an Amtrak train, I met some guy--I can't remember how we got talking--he said, "I think I know who you are," and he said to me, "You were my preceptor." "Oh," I say. It was a crazy year. I said, "Oh." He said, "Yes, you scared all of us." [laughter] It was a prelude to the fact that I was going to have a career in law enforcement, working at the Department of Justice later, where I would continue to scare lots of people. That was Frelinghuysen.

My junior year, I lived in Europe. Then, my senior year, I lived at 7 Delafield Street, and we rented a bomb of a house, a teeny tiny dilapidated little house. It was just Janet Shropshire, Cynthia Kale, Phyllis Hawkins and me. That was our senior year, and we thought we were terribly sophisticated having our own house. We thought we were just really quite the cat's pajamas.

EW: During your undergraduate years, please correct me if I'm wrong, you did history as a major.

LH: I did, but I really did everything else. I just took anything that I thought would be challenging and would be interesting. Initially, I took political science, and, remember, I told you when I went to Holland, I really thought, "Ooh, this international affairs and foreign service, this would be very interesting work." I took political science, and I hated the class. I didn't understand it. It wasn't at all what I thought it was going to be. I was completely confused by it, and I quickly decided [I] didn't want to do that. But one of the things I did was I took everything [else]. I took political science and I took philosophy and I took English literature and I took calculus and then I started taking German. I think I first probably had an introductory German class. So, to take philosophy, to take calculus, to take--I never took "Western Civ" and I always thought that I must be the first history major that never took "Western Civilization." I took no prerequisites to be a history major, and they had prerequisites at the time. I didn't think about a major. My classes were incredibly diverse, but what I wanted to do and what was important to me, as quickly as I could, is to get out of the introductory classes. I didn't like the big lecture halls, and I didn't like the anonymity. My second semester of freshman year, I somehow talked myself into like a 400-level history class. I loved the small seminars, so I wanted to get into all kinds of classes that were small seminars.

After I did my junior year abroad, my senior year, I leapfrogged into a 400-level conversation class of German because I had finished my studies early in Glasgow University and lived on my own in Germany for three months, and my German just went--it got pretty conversational. I decided to take a 400-level conversation class in German with all native-born German speakers. [laughter]

I took Greek history at the 400-level, two semesters of that, and I'm taking "Women's History" with Professor O'Neill--that I found fascinating--and I think that was a 400-level class. I took "Constitutional History" with [Professor] Paul Clemens, and I loved that. My senior year, I talked to--I can't remember the Chair of the History Department--somehow, he said to me, "Why don't you become a history major?" because I realized I didn't have a major. They [the history department] waived all the prerequisites for me, and I said, "Sure." They just told me how many classes I had to take, and I got to take things like "Greek History" and "American Women's History" and "The History of the American Constitution." It wasn't like I did a deep dive. I just did a lot of things that I found challenging and interesting, and I pretty much selected my classes by the professors that I thought would be the most interesting professors, but I never thought I'd be a historian. [Editor's Note: William L. O'Neill was a Professor of History Emeritus at Rutgers University. O'Neill taught at Rutgers from 1971 to 2006. He passed away in 2016 at the age of eighty. Paul Clemens is a Professor of History at Rutgers University. He joined the faculty at Rutgers College in 1974.]

SI: Going back to when you first got to campus, were there any kind of culture shock to adjusting to this new environment? Beyond just the fact that you were one of the first women in Rutgers College, you were coming from a smaller school to a larger school. Does anything stand out as being a difficult adjustment or just something that stands out in your memory?

LH: The things that I can talk about would be the culture shock of coming to an all-male college. That would be the culture shock. Coming to college, I was so ready. I was beyond ready. In many ways, I always felt older, and I had said that since my parents divorced, I felt like I wasn't a child for a long time and going to Europe and living there. Who knows if I was mature? We don't know that, but I thought of myself as being very mature and worldly, and I was very ready to go to college.

When I went to college, I had a 1963 Rambler that I got for a hundred dollars when I was in high school, and I drove myself to college. This was not like your parents drive you and see you off. My mother encouraged me to be very independent. In many ways, she needed me to be independent because of the challenges she had in her life, but I don't think that was a negative. I think that that was a positive, and it was like I packed myself, almost like going to camp, with a trunk and threw it in the car and drove myself to college, just like I took myself up that weekend, drove myself up for that Presidential Scholarship interview weekend. I'm terrible with directions. I get lost all the time, I can't read a map to save my life to this day, and this is before GPS, but I figured out the New Jersey Turnpike, and I got myself to college. I would say to myself, "They speak English here. Whatever happens, it's so much easier than it was living in Europe," so off I go. [laughter] I didn't find a culture shock coming to college. I was ready to be on my own, and in fact, I think, in many ways, I was on my own growing up to sort of figure things out for myself.

AN: Were your extra-curriculars in college as diverse as the classes you took?

LH: No. Well, let me tell you about the extracurriculars. I thought, "Ooh, I'll join the swim team." Now, remember, I told you I was very good for my very bad swim team, so I really wasn't that good a swimmer, but I liked it. [laughter] I meet the swim coach, and apparently, the

swim coach was the coach for the women's Olympic swimmers or something. I'm like, "This is great. This is fabulous." Now, I'm telling you again, I'm really not that good, but I'm thinking, "I'm teachable. Maybe we can figure this out together," and this was the culture shock. I go to him, and I didn't really even tell him the truth about my times. I think I gave him my swim times for yards and pretended that was meter time. I think I shaved a couple seconds off maybe, and it was still laughable. Whatever my qualifications were, even making them sound better than they were, were still not impressive to him. His response to me was, "Well, we don't have any women's swim teams." I don't think they had any women's sports teams, but you could be the-- what do they call it? The water boy, whatever, the equipment girl. [Editor's Note: Varsity sports for women at Rutgers did not start until 1974.]

SI: Team manager?

LH: No, they didn't give it a good title like that. No, I think it was like you could be the runner or get them the water or give them the equipment. I don't know, what equipment do swimmers get? I don't know, but I was offered some menial role, and I was shocked. I was just very highly offended. I was like, "Ah!" The point is, Rutgers College, I went there in 1972. This is before Title IX had passed. They didn't have to do anything, and they didn't do anything that year. To find the locker room--this is my memory and I hope it's not an exaggeration--I had to go through some spooky furnace room in the basement of the old gym to go find some room that they had said was a women's locker room. I was like, "I'm going to be attacked and assaulted here. They'll never find the body. I'm not going down to this locker room." No, they didn't have any sports for women or anything like that.

I got involved in Rutgers Community Action. I don't know if that still exists. It was a fabulous volunteer program, where we would go and do various social activities. I remember there were floods in Wilkes-Barre [PA], and we would go out and clean people's flooded basements on trips. I became a big sister to a little girl named Margaret in Highland Park at the elementary school. I got involved in that. I think I became a ref for volleyball. They did eventually create some intramural teams, and I think I did some--I can't remember--maybe it was reffing. I can't remember now. I don't know if that was volunteer; maybe I got paid. I don't remember that. I think, beyond Rutgers Community Action and Big Brother-Big Sister, I didn't get involved really--oh, I did do some basketball games, which, again, remember, I sucked and I didn't get any better as I got older because I didn't play it. The Quadrangle, in the spring, the dorms would compete [in intramural basketball games]. They were like, "What are they going to do with the women dorms?" We said, "Well, we're competing." It's not like we knew how to play basketball or something like that. I think there are a lot of pictures of it, of those games, in that yearbook that year, that that was like a big way that they were showing about the women coming into Rutgers. In every single photograph, my feet are firmly planted on the ground. There's not one moment that I ever jump in the air because I didn't have to because everyone was much shorter than I was. [laughter] I remember looking at that thinking, "That is not how you're supposed to be playing basketball. You're supposed to be jumping." That freshman year, I did do that.

Then, we got involved--I can't quite remember--the Rutgers History Department developed a certificate in women's studies. I do remember, and I don't know how we organized it, but we did have, back in the day, we called them consciousness-raising groups. We would meet, and we

would be supportive of each other and talk through our issues that we were identifying as being women in the college, and what the challenges are, and trying to establish some kind of community and support for one another, but I don't remember how that got structured.

SI: Did that include women from Douglass and Livingston and other colleges, or was it just for Rutgers College women?

LH: I don't remember. I do have a recollection of going to visit somebody at Douglass College and being in a state of shock of how wonderful it was. It was like, "Oh." They had like availability of sewing machines. The facilities, I just remember thinking, "Wow, it's like going from a male boot camp over to something where somebody was thinking about maybe what a woman would want." I don't even remember what the things were that I found that were so attractive. Maybe they had sewing machines or something, not that I sew. I can't remember what was it, but I was like, "Oh, this would be a more comfortable place to live, wow." [laughter] We weren't even aware of what we were missing because when we showed up--I don't know what preparation they did for women. They posted a little paper, just a piece of paper they'd post on top of the men's room, and they would say, "Women's Room," with a piece of masking tape. They didn't even change the signs. They didn't take out the urinals. There wasn't a lot of preparation for that. No gym, no sports teams, that's what I remember, no bathrooms with real signage.

SI: Do other professors stand out in your memory as being either memorable in class or that you got to work with in some other context?

LH: Paul Clemens was fabulous, in the History Department. I became good friends with him and his wife, and I remember when I graduated, they took me to Washington for a weekend as a graduation gift and came down to Haddonfield. At that point, my senior year, my mother had remarried, and then all the Haddons--Haddon Heights, Haddon Township, and Haddonfield--now Mom lives in Haddonfield, and they stopped by and picked me up, met my mom and my new stepdad, and we went down to Washington. It was really very generous, very kind. I remember him.

I remember the Dean of Students. See, remember I told you when I got to college I thought I was all grown up? Well, it even got worse when I had spent a year in Europe. When I came back my senior year, I really thought I was grown up. When we lived on Delafield Street, I decided that we would have dinners once a week with various professors and invite them to the house, which is a little presumptuous. I invited the dean of students [Howard J. Crosby]. I don't remember his name now, but he was an older gentleman, and he gladly came and he was lovely. I invited my Greek history professor. I invited Paul Clemens, my American constitutional law professor. [I] can't remember who else I invited, but I must have invited everybody, and we didn't know how to cook. The food [we served] was horrible. [Editor's Note: Howard J. Crosby served as a long-time administrator at Rutgers, including nineteen years as the Dean of Men and later Dean of Students before his retirement in 1983. Arnold Grobman held the post of Dean of Rutgers College from 1967 to 1972. G. Reginald Bishop, a long-time Rutgers professor and administrator, served as Acting Dean of Rutgers College in 1974. Richard P. McCormick held

the post of Dean of Rutgers College from 1974 to 1977. Peter Charanis was a Greek-born scholar of Byzantium who served as a history professor at Rutgers College from 1938 to 1976.]

We each cooked one night a week. Janet was the most creative cook. She would go into some state--I don't know--of inspiration, and she would create some dish and she didn't know how she created it. When you cook that night, you had to pay for your food. My roommate, Phyllis, was a farm girl, and she would cook massive, massive quantities of food. Cynthia Kale was a vegetarian, and so she would create inedible food. Back then, when you did a non-meatloaf, it would take out all your fillings, and it was pretty horrible. When she'd leave town, we'd all bring out the hamburgers. Then, when I cooked, I would create the cheapest food that could ever be created, like, "That was seventeen cents a plate," I would say.

For Paul Clemens--this is how nice the professors were--Paul Clemens, I get a recipe from a man who was in the administration of Rutgers, who was really quite a gourmet cook. I worked with him, and we'll come back to that on Title IX. He's the one who introduced me to my future husband. He was in the vice president's office; you were correct. The woman's name was Alice Fisher, who was the VP. Anyway, he gives me a recipe that I don't know how to follow to make French onion soup. Now, French onion soup is going to be cheap, because it's just onions, right? He explains to me that what you do is you take crusty bread--which is great because that's leftover bread, so that's cheap too--and you put a little vermouth in the bread. Well, I didn't drink; I didn't know anything about alcohol. I buy a little thing of vermouth. I soaked the bread in vermouth. The French onion soup came out as basically as warmed vermouth. [laughter] It was, "What the hell is this person serving me?" and Paul is sweet enough, "Oh, thank you. It's very good." [laughter] It's like melted cheese over warm vermouth. [laughter]

Anyway, I have a friend now, Rosemary Gambardella, who became the Chief federal Bankruptcy Judge [in New Jersey]. I think you guys are interviewing her as well. She came over to dinner once, and she remembered that the food was inedible, just totally inedible. [Editor's Note: The Honorable Rosemary Gambardella, RC '76, NLAW '79, is a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of New Jersey. She has served in this position since 1985 and served as the Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the District of New Jersey from 1998 to 2005.]

It's like a shock that we lived [through] it. Then, after dinner, we would expect the professor to engage us in very intellectual conversations, and I'm sure these professors could not wait to get out of there. [laughter] I have, through marriage, a cousin who went to Harvard College and I told her this story, and she said, "Oh, yes, we invited Julia ..." I'm sorry, the great chef Julia.

SI: Julia Child? [Editor's Note: Julia Child was an American celebrity chef who authored the bestselling cookbook *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*.]

LH: Yes, they invited Julia Child, who lived in their neighborhood, over for dinner, the Harvard women, Radcliffe women, undergraduates, and she said, "How presumptuous were we to cook for her?" [laughter] That's the marvelous thing about youth. Why not, right? You should be full of self-confidence and just do it.

SI: [laughter] Tell us a bit more about the preceptor year.

LH: Preceptor year was the year of flashers. Did you ever hear of flashing? It was a phenomenon that went on, and people would strip naked and they would run in packs. I want to tell you right now--and it's not just because you're recording me--I didn't do that. I would not do that. I would never do that, but this is the folly of youth. One of the cool things about being a preceptor in Frelinghuysen, in the River Dorms, is I got my own room. Besides the money, you didn't have to pay, back then, for your board. Your boarding was free. I got my own balcony, and they gave you a telephone. Now, back then, there were no cell phones, and nobody could get a phone in their dorm and we all had to share a public phone in the hallway. We only called home on Sundays, because that was the cheapest rate. You just were not tethered to your parents like my children's generation would be tethered, or you may be tethered. I got my own phone, and my mother calls me on my own phone. I could take it out to the balcony. My mother called and said, "Linda, I just listened to the national news. There's this thing going on in campuses; it's called flashing. People are running around naked, and they're just running in big packs around. That's not happening at Rutgers College, is it?" I looked down my balcony, [laughter] and there's this huge pack of naked-ass people running by, just running right by. I assured my mother, no, it was not happening at Rutgers College; I'm sure these are the kinds of things that happen at other colleges, but it was not happening while I'm at Rutgers College. [laughter] That's one memory of being a preceptor: my own room, my own balcony, my own phone.

I don't think I should have done it because I was a sophomore. I had this marvelous roommate, and she became a preceptor also. We did it for financial reasons, but I was a sophomore. I was too young to be a preceptor. I'm a preceptor to seniors, and it was fifty-six people. It was like twenty-three on this side and twenty-three on that side, and it was guys and they were idiots. Quite frankly, I'm sure I'll be criticized for this on some level, but if you were to basically test the maturity level, back then, of the average eighteen-year-old, and you looked at the male compared to the female, I think you would see a more mature level at the female population than you would at the male population. So, my guys had issues. I'm younger and I'm female and I'm in a position of authority. It is 1973-'74, and they're not used to this and they didn't like it and they resented it and they didn't want to hear about it. Now, I went into being a preceptor thinking, "This is going to be wonderful. I'm going to be a counselor. I'm going to be someone who is navigating the college well, and I'm going to help them through these times with sound, rational, reasonable advice." I thought the role really ended up being more of a cop, because they would get drunk and they would throw things over the balcony, like furniture, to cars below. I would think this was unacceptable behavior, and I would inform them that this was unacceptable behavior. Maybe because of my height or because of my demeanor, as I told you, decades later, the young attorney encountered me and realized I had been his preceptor, and he told me, "Yes, we were really, really afraid of you." [laughter] They were idiots, and I would tell them about these actions that had consequences. So, it was not what I thought it would be, and I think that I would have benefitted more from continuing in the lovely relationship with the roommate that I had, with Phyllis Hawkins that year, but that's how it ended up to be.

SI: Do you have a question, Amanda?

AN: I love hearing the Rutgers stories. I want to know if by this point, maybe sophomore year or even talking more senior year when you lived off campus, was there a point where you were moving towards law as a career, as something you would want to do long term?

LH: Yes, that's a great question, and I don't know if it was my freshman year or my sophomore year when I figured that out. I certainly figured out that I wasn't going to go into foreign services as soon as I hated "Poli Sci 101." I do remember, very, very clearly--and I always have--what my thinking process was with regard to law. With regard to law, I looked at lawyers, and I saw that they were in the public sector, that they were in the private sector, and that people looked at them as though they knew something, that they were authority figures, that they seemed to have an expertise that in times of crisis or in the news, to figure out the world, to understand how things operate, they [journalists] would be speaking to attorneys. As I said, I saw you don't have to be necessarily in government, that you could be in the private sector, that you could go into business, and it would still be a good degree. What I did realize was that women needed credentials. There was just no question in my mind that women needed credentials to be taken seriously. I said, "This is a flexible degree, and I don't know exactly what kind of law I want to practice." I had no clue as to what lawyers did or didn't do. I probably didn't even understand the difference between civil and criminal, but I decided that I was going to be a lawyer, and that that certainly would be a worthwhile degree.

It ended up being a fabulous match for me, just a fabulous match. There are many, many lawyers that are miserable. There are many, many lawyers that do not like the practice of law, and many lawyers that get burnt out, or that it's just not a good fit for them. I just got lucky. It just ended up being a really good fit for me, and it works very well for my personality. I'm still working only because I still find it fascinating and enjoyable to do it.

I don't know what year that was, but I was aware that my grades were going to be very important, and that I wanted to keep up my grades. I think I took logic one semester because I thought that that was going to possibly be helpful. I took statistics because I thought maybe that would be helpful in writing what used to be called, back then, a Brandeis brief. Those were courses I did not enjoy. [laughter] I didn't really need them to be a lawyer. You can study anything and go to law school. [Editor's Note: A Brandeis brief is a brief in which economic and sociological data, historical experience and expert opinions are assembled to support legal arguments. It is named for Louis D. Brandeis, who first introduced evidence of social and economic factors in his arguments before the Supreme Court in the case *Muller v. Oregon* in 1908. Brandeis went on to serve as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court from 1916 to 1939.]

EW: Did you go to law school directly after your undergraduate years?

LH: I did, and maybe it would have been a good idea to take some time off. I go to law school, and that first class, I'm sitting in contracts, and they're talking about consideration. I had been a history major, so I thought, "Oh, they only have eighteen pages of reading, not two hundred [pages]." I thought I'd read right through the cases, boom, boom, boom. "I'm not sure what they're all talking about, but I'll get into that lecture and they'll explain it to me." Well, I literally, when they talked about consideration for a contract, that's plain English, so I thought that meant

being polite. Consideration is that quid pro quo, a contract's not enforceable unless each side gives something to the other, and that's what makes it enforceable. I was sitting there going, "Ooh, whoa. I'm reading this stuff and not understanding it. This is a little scary." Half my class was thirty and older. They had done a lot of different things, and they had worked. They owned houses. They were married. They had mortgages. [I] didn't even know what a mortgage was. That was a little bit challenging for me. It's probably not a bad idea if you want to take time off between college and law school. I know they want everybody to do that for an MBA [Master in Business Administration]. But I had already traveled for a year in Europe on that scholarship money. I had studied at [University of] Glasgow from September to March, got done with my studies early, went to Germany, then I went and traveled to South America, and ended up spending almost two months in Haiti in that year. I traveled all over the world, and I couldn't quite justify taking off [more time]. I got into Rutgers Law. It was very affordable, it was like five or seven hundred dollars a semester, and at that point, I had figured out how I could do it on loans and put myself through law school. I thought, "I know what I want to do. Why put it off?" and went straight through.

AN: May I ask what you did in the summers during college? What did you do that summer between graduation and law school?

LH: That summer, what did I do? Most summers I lifeguarded. I could never get a job as a waitress; I could not figure out why I could not get a job as a waitress. I did lifeguarding. The summer before law school, I don't remember right now. I think most of my jobs were--I know through college it was lifeguarding, but what I did that summer ... I didn't travel. I don't think I traveled that year. I might have done lifeguarding again. I can't remember.

SI: You had mentioned the story about Title IX a few times. Was that during the year you were a preceptor, or was it later?

LH: I do remember what I did. Okay, I got a job at a health club. Again, it was lifeguarding, but it was lifeguarding women. They would have women hours at the health club in Northeast Pennsylvania, and they would have men hours. [It] was real hard to get a job [back then], and I sort of had to pretend I was going to do this for the rest of my life or something in order to get the [job] because it really wasn't a summer job. I do remember, I taught classes on water exercises, and all the ladies would be naked. [laughter] I would wear a bathing suit, because it was women hours only, and that was crazy. That was this sort of crazy health club job, but, yes, it was lifeguarding. It was lifeguarding. I'm sorry, your question, Shaun.

SI: I was asking about the Title IX story.

LH: Oh, the Title IX. I come back my senior year, and Melanie Willoughby, I think, was the president of the student government. Melanie knew I was very interested in women's issues. In addition to the History Department, I got this brand-new certificate of women's studies. William O'Neill--I think was his name--or Professor O'Neill had written that, and there weren't many books on American women and history, and I loved it. Boy, that year I came back from Europe, there were like a ton of these books, the whole market had just burst open, but I got this women's [history] certificate. [Editor's Note: William O'Neill authored several books on the women's

movement in the United States, including *Everyone was Brave: A History of Feminism in America*, published in 1971.]

In any event, because of that, Melanie knew my interest in women's issues, and she said to me, "Would you like to be the student representative to work on Rutgers University," not the college but the university, "implementing Title IX?" "Yes, that works for me." Oh, I was so excited. I worked with an individual by the name of David Burns, and David was a special assistant--I think her name was Alice Fisher. Anyway, she was the VP of the university, so this is at the university level. This was not just Rutgers College, but this was in the Old Queens building or something, those old buildings. I would go down there to work, and David and I became fast friends, and there was another gal who was a graduate student. Her name is Ellen--I forgot her last name. The three of us worked on sort of how we were going to roll out Title IX and how we were going to educate everybody about its existence. Back then, you did things by pamphlets, "This is what Title IX is." Nobody knew what Title IX was. Back then, Title IX was really just about equal sports, access to those kind of facilities, or at least that was the focus that I remember. We worked on that, and I became great friends with David.

David would always talk about his great friend Jerry, and he was another administrator over at Livingston College. Meanwhile, David is telling Jerry about this great student he's working with by the name of Linda. "Oh," Jerry says, and he was only a year or two out of college, "Oh, I'd like to meet her," he says. "Oh no," David says. He goes, "You can't meet her, no, no. She will break your heart, no." We never met that year. That summer after I graduated college, I went to visit David and his girlfriend, now wife, who together lived off campus on seven acres. He was quite a gourmet chef and had a huge garden and was very social. He and Valerie were very social. It was the summertime, and Jerry is there. Well, I already liked Jerry. Why do I like Jerry? Because for a whole year, I heard great stories about Jerry and what a great guy Jerry is. I already liked him, and to boot, he was cute. That's how I got to meet Jerry. I always say it was from Title IX. Had I not been put in place by Melanie to be the student representative working with the administration to do the rollout of Title IX, I wouldn't have gotten to know David, who introduced me to Jerry. When I tell people I know my husband from Title IX, people now think, "Oh, was he harassing you? Did you bring a Title IX complaint against him?" [laughter] That's how I met Jerry.

When I started law school, I looked around my law school class, and I said, "I'm not dating here, no. I'm not dating any of these, no, no, no, no. I'm not dating any of them." Why? Because they're a bunch of alpha males. Everybody would be fighting, and you want to be a winner. That's not really true, but that's what I thought, "We'd all be wanting to be the better debater." I was very happy to start dating Jerry outside of law school, because I thought, "You're sane. You live in a sane world. You're not in this goofy world of all these crazy competitive law students." He was sort of my rock during that time.

SI: Do you remember any of the challenges in the implementation committee? Does anything stand out from that process?

LH: With Title IX, no, I don't, I really don't. I think a lot of it was educating people about what Title IX provides for, and it was a communication function. We did not go to each department

and say, "Okay, you've got to do this, or you've got to do that." That was being done probably at another level at the university. They just wanted us to do a rollout in communicating, so there were the pamphlets. We wrote and handed out pamphlets, and that was it. I didn't do public speaking about it or anything like that.

SI: You mentioned that you were involved in these consciousness-raising groups and smaller group discussions in class, or it sounds like some of them were out of class. Do you remember the issues that would come up frequently, or if would you do anything about them?

LH: Yes, two things. One, in the class, with regard to the "History of Women in America," it was nuts to me to learn so much that I had had no clue about prior. I knew nothing about this. I knew nothing about the suffragist movement. I knew nothing about the fight to win the right to vote or to go to medical school or have the right to go to law school or the roles that women played in government. I knew nothing, and I kept thinking to myself, "How could I not know this? How could we have not gotten any of this history in high school?" I think it's very much also like African American history, which, back then, there was none of this history that was provided in our high school system. At college, you could get it by taking a class that focused on it, but it was sort of eye-opening to me.

Separate from that were these--I don't even remember how they were organized or how they all got together, but back then, they were like consciousness-raising sessions. We would all sit there and identify that we had these issues. In high school, we didn't have vocabulary to say that something was sexist. We didn't have vocabulary to say that, "I'm a feminist, and I believe in women's rights." We were literally educating ourselves about these things, about the book *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. That was like, "Whoa, what is this?" It was a time that there was limited ability to get information. Today, you can say, "Well, I want to know something," and you go on Google and you find something out, but we didn't have anything like that. Just to get a vocabulary was huge, so that you could even find out what the questions were to ask. We were also talking very much at that time about the importance of supporting each other and not viewing ourselves as competitors for men, and that we need to support each other and find our common ground and our common interest. It was just a time of learning new things. What can I say? It's things your mothers didn't teach you, or you didn't learn it in high school growing up. Today, I think, young people do learn this stuff very early on. Here we were, eighteen, nineteen, twenty; we were trying to figure things out. We read *The Feminine Mystique*, and all those kind of books were eye-opening. *Ms.* magazine was out. We were reading those articles. This was just new stuff. [Editor's Note: *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is a book about women's health and sexuality compiled by Our Bodies Ourselves, first called the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. The work originally came out as a pamphlet in 1970 and was published by Simon and Schuster in 1973. *The Feminine Mystique* is a 1963 book by Betty Friedan. *Ms.* magazine is a feminist magazine that was established in 1971 by Gloria Steinem and others. Today, it is published quarterly.]

When I went to law school, Rutgers Law School in Newark made national news because my class was the first time women were fifty-one percent of the class. Before, it was always a very small minority. But when we got out of law school, there still were very few women practicing law. During a two-year federal clerkship, I never saw a woman try a case. I didn't see a woman

come in and argue motions in court. It was always the men. Maybe a woman would be there at the counsel table in the courtroom, but she wasn't the lead attorney. It was different times.

AN: I noticed there is a pretty clear stream in your life about focusing on women's studies, women's rights, women's achievement. In law school, did that continue for you?

LH: Rutgers had this fabulous clinic called the Women's Rights Litigation Clinic, and it was run by a professor by the name of Nadine Taub, T-A-U-B. She brought and as students we worked together with her--on the first case to argue that sex harassment was sex discrimination under Title VII--in the Third Circuit. [Editor's Note: Nadine Taub, who passed away in 2020, served as a professor at Rutgers Law School-Newark from 1973 to 2010. Taub founded the Women's Rights Litigation Clinic (WRC), a legal clinic at Rutgers Law School that was the first of its kind.]

By way of explanation, the district courts are divided by circuits, and there are eleven circuits. Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and the Virgin Islands are in the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. You've got the District Court, then you've got the Court of Appeals, and then you've got the U.S. Supreme Court. We've just got three levels in the federal system.

The case that we worked on was called *Tomkins vs. PSE&G*, and it was the first case--it was the first case--in our circuit (and it's before the Supreme Court ruled) that said that sex harassment is a cause of action [under Title VII]. In the district court, [Judge] Herb Stern had ruled on a 12(b)(6) motion, a motion to dismiss, when they brought it against the utility company PSE&G, where the secretary was sexually harassed by her boss. When she was seeking a promotion, he wanted sexual favors in return. The district court said, "Well, that's not sex discrimination. That's not nice, but it's not sex discrimination." In all the courts, they'd said that, and they threw it out. The Third Circuit agreed with the Women's Rights Litigation Clinic that said that this is a cause of action. I got to argue in district court on a motion, when I'm a first-year law student. And we worked on other kinds of cases. [Editor's Note: The decision in *Tomkins v. Public Service Elec. & Gas Co.*, 568 F.2d 1044 (3rd Cir. 1977), held that sexual harassment violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, thus protecting women in the workplace. Herbert Jay Stern served as a judge of the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey from 1973 until 1987.]

It was a very big deal, and I put it on my resumé, because you're in law school, you've got nothing to put on your resumé because you haven't done anything yet. I put it in that I got to argue in district court, and I got to work on this case and the discovery process and all that stuff. But I had to take it off my resumé because when I interviewed at law firms, they would say, "What do you mean sex harassment is a cause of action as sex discrimination?" That meant I'm a troublemaker, and it had to come off. My women's studies certificate at Rutgers, that had to come off because that labeled me, "I'm a troublemaker. I am a radical feminist, man-hating B-I-T-C-H," and they didn't want any troublemakers. I couldn't get a job with that stuff on my resumé, and that came off and never went back on my resumé.

Rutgers Law School was great that way. It was a terrific litigation clinic, and I worked there for--I can't remember, is it my first year maybe? First year, second? I do know that one summer--I

think it was the summer of my first year, I don't know--I got some scholarship money, foundation money, something, so I got to work in the Women's Rights Clinic over the summer, too. That was wonderful work, because this is the time, '76 to '79, that the courts really were winning on women's rights issues. Ruth Bader Ginsburg was leading the charge, and she was a former--not in my time but before me--she was a professor at Rutgers Law School-Newark. She was leading the charge, as were other women, to advance women's rights. We were winning, not in the state legislatures, but in the courts, and so it was a very exciting time. I think Rutgers was a great place to be for that. [Editor's Note: Ruth Bader Ginsburg served as an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1993 until her death in 2020. Ginsburg taught at Rutgers Law School-Newark from 1963 to 1972. From 1972 to 1980, she taught at Columbia Law School. In 1972, Ginsburg co-founded the Women's Rights Project at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The following year, she became chief counsel of the Women's Rights Project, arguing cases that made significant legal advances in women's rights under the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause.]

SI: We are coming up on two hours, and I think there is a lot more to talk about. We will ask one or two more questions and then come back for another session, if that is all right with you?

LH: Yes. I hope it hasn't been too boring.

SI: No, this is great.

LH: Okay, all right. Do we want to go into my legal career next?

SI: In the next session, since I think there is a lot to talk about there. One question I have is about the Rutgers period. You spent this year abroad, not only at the University of Glasgow, but traveling around. Tell us a little bit more about those experiences and what stands out and how things kind of changed you.

LH: Sure. When I lived in Glasgow, we were initially in a dormitory. I felt that I had gone back to the 1950s. Although it was a coed dormitory, it was called Horselethill House, the students in Glasgow were extremely parochial and very conservative and unworldly and lovely. They were absolutely lovely, but I felt like Ozzie and Harriet Nelson in the TV show, like it was the 1950s. When we were in the dining hall, if a woman got up to get seconds on dessert--because we had to go out to an area where they distributed the food--everybody would pound the table and stamp their feet because a woman was asking for seconds on desert. [laughter] It was like, "What?" [laughter] [Editor's Note: Ozzie Nelson graduated from Rutgers College in 1927 and Rutgers-Newark School of Law in 1930. With a background during his college days of being a musician and band leader, Ozzie Nelson turned to a career in entertainment. He hired Harriet Hilliard as a singer in his band, and they got married in 1934. They starred in the radio show *Ozzie and Harriet Show* and later the television series *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*. It starred the real-life couple Ozzie and Harriet Nelson and their two sons, David and Ricky.]

I met a German woman who was studying architecture. We're still great friends; she lives in London. She said, "Why don't we go rent an apartment?" So, we rented a flat, and it was literally a cold-water flat. You had to, back then, put shillings in a meter to get heat. We were

freezing all the time. I think I showered once a week at the gym, where I could get some hot water, but in any event, we were living the life. It was great. It was Glasgow. Glasgow was a gritty city, and we were sort of loving it. But I was frustrated by the fact that I am teaching my German roommate brilliant English, and I still cannot speak a second language. I mean, I was completely fed up with myself.

I took these honors classes. I didn't have to sit for these examinations at the end that the Scottish students had to. I got done with my studies like in March, and I got a job in Germany initially working at a youth hostel as a cleaning person. Then, I got jobs as an au pair. I went to Germany, and I knew no one. I went with maybe a hundred or two hundred bucks in my pocket, and I said, "I will speak English to no one." Well, my German level was pretty good for a four-year-old or a three-year-old. I could basically speak to toddlers, and that was about it. That was the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. It was the hardest thing I ever did in my life, because I would not speak English to anybody. I just immersed myself in learning German, and it grew exponentially. It did particularly well when I would go to clubs at night and drink beer, or at least I thought my German got better when I was drinking beer. I went to Heidelberg, which is a university town, and I knew no one and made friends. Being alone like that without a support system is very scary and exhilarating, and I did that. I wanted to stay all the way to August, but my mother and my sister announced to me that they were getting married the same week, not to each other, and I had to come home. [laughter] I came home and then, with German women that I met, continued my travels after the weddings in Central and South America.

Again, thanks to Rutgers, I'm living like a miser and working in Germany. Back then, you could travel for very little money, and that was a very exciting time in my life and a very challenging time in my life. We ended up in Haiti, and being in Haiti, Baby Doc was in charge. It was a dictatorship. It was an extremely oppressive government, terrifically corrupt. People were afraid to speak freely there, and yet the Haitian people have such a rich culture of art, music, dance. I'd never seen such poverty in my life, and yet to just to see the joy these people had in their families was remarkable. That was a very eye-opening experience to live there for close to two months. One of my German girlfriends stayed there. Sadly, we lost touch with her. I don't know where she ended up, but she stayed there for several years. [Editor's Note: Jean-Claude Duvalier, known as "Baby Doc," ruled Haiti from 1971 to 1986.]

AN: I will ask the last question. That sounds like a very transformative point in your life. Is there a specific story from really anywhere that you have been that was really rewarding, outside of Germany? We did talk a bit about that.

LH: Any experience, do you mean in traveling?

AN: In traveling. You just told a story about your experiences of Haiti. Is there anything else like that, that really stood out to you?

LH: Yes. There is one about Germany that I would like to share, if that's all right with you. To get from Glasgow to Germany, I'm taking a train to London. Then, you take the ferry over to France, and then I'm taking a variety of trains to finally get to Heidelberg. I'm meeting people on each train, and then they leave, and more people come on, and I meet them. It's like twenty-four

hours--I can't remember how long it was, but it was long--and I was pretty exhausted. At this point, anybody I had met and had one of these relationships with, everybody's getting off the train. I realize I'm going to be all by myself. But, at the very end, I meet this woman; her name is Beatrice. She was just a beautiful, beautiful woman, and she was my age and somewhat aloof. She's asking me what I'm doing, and in lousy German, I say, "Oh, hello. I am Linda. I am so old. I get a job. I work. I babysit. I learn German. I no speak English anymore." You could just imagine how horrible my German was, from high-school level German. She's listening to me, and she is obviously able to speak English, but she will not speak English with me. I'm arriving in Germany, like an idiot, at midnight or something like that, and she's coming to Heidelberg. She talks to me, and she says, "Well, you can come sleep on my couch. I have a blanket. You can come sleep at my place before you go to the youth hostel, sleep at my apartment." This is wonderful, and I want to glom on to her, for her to be my safety net. Then, she shows me how to get to the youth hostel, and she gives me her number, her address. I don't think we called; back then, nobody had cell phones. They hadn't been invented yet. She wants me to touch base with her once a week, and I do. Even though she did not let me glom on to her like I wanted to do, she was somebody that I knew, that if I needed to crash on her floor, if I needed a blanket, if I needed a meal, she would be there for me. I thought that was extraordinary, because I truly do not think I was interesting, someone who's going, "Hello, I am nineteen years old." I mean, I wasn't interesting.

We go to Haiti together, and again, she's independent, I'm independent of her, but we're in a situation where I am speaking English now with someone for the first time. Now, her English was great, but she would never speak it with me. She looked at me, and she said, "You're someone else. You're someone else." I said to her in German--and my German then was okay--I said, "Oh, yes, I'm not as stupid in English as I am in German." [laughter] She was a lifeline. She was a sweet, sweet soul, and I'm sorry that we didn't stay in touch. When I was in law school, I went back to Haiti to visit her. On the internet, I've tried to find her, and I can't find her. I don't know what happened to her.

SI: Ellen, do you have any other questions?

EW: I know people nowadays, in high school, Spanish and French are the main languages they learn. When did you decide that German was going to be something you learned, or was it one of the classes offered in high school that you just randomly decided to take?

LH: Yes, in high school back then, it was German, French, and Spanish. Personally, I sort of wish I had done Spanish because I think Spanish is something I could have practiced and used. German, the problem is there's no one that I'll meet whose English is not better than my German is, so you don't get the opportunities to speak it. I studied German because my stepfather, the man my mother married, was a Holocaust survivor. He had left Germany when he was twelve. He was a German Jew. I thought, "Oh, I'll learn German, and I can speak German with him." I had no clue, no clue, that he never wanted to speak German ever again. When I came back from Germany--and I was fluent conversationally in German, which is many years now long gone--I didn't understand as a child that this was not something that he wanted to ever remember or speak, but I learned it for him.

SI: Thank you very much for all your time today, and we look forward to continuing the series. I will have Don reach out to you and set another date, but this so far has been fascinating and we are looking forward to getting more into your law school and law career afterwards.

LH: All right, and then we get to the grandchildren.

SI: Sure, absolutely.

LH: Because they are the best part. [laughter]

-----END OF TRANSCRIPT-----

Transcribed by Jesse Braddell 5/16/2022
Reviewed by Zach Batista 6/7/2022
Reviewed by Kathryn Tracy Rizzi 7/29/2022
Reviewed by Linda Dale Hoffa 4/26/2023