

Interviewee: MARY BRETT DANIELS
Interviewer: MARY EMMA HARRIS
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[BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1]

MEH: [GIVES IDENTIFICATION]. Mary just came up from Philadelphia this morning to New York to help take care of her granddaughter. Mary, how did you hear about Black Mountain College?

MBD: My sister graduated from Black Mountain. In fact, she was one of the few graduates of Black Mountain, and she was two years older than I was. She heard about it by reading the article by Louis Adamic in My America. I still have that book. I remember it so well. She was determined to come to Black Mountain: it was her only choice. She considered Antioch, but Black Mountain was—it was very clear to her that that's where she wanted to be. She was interested in writing. She was a poet, and she was also very political. She had been involved in the peace movement when she was in high school. I think it was probably '39 that she came to Black Mountain. So, she came to Lee Hall. So, my experience at Black Mountain has been rather special because it covers both her friendships and her experience there and then my own. We were never there together except for a very brief period when she came back to take her master's exam—her graduating exam. I visited her at Lee Hall when I was still in high school and

that convinced me without any doubt that that's where I wanted to be, too.

However, when I came they had moved to Lake Eden. When I visited her at Lee Hall, I went over to work on the Studies Building with some of her good friends, and that whole experience for someone in high school with a background in the Middle West and from a family that assumed everybody would go to college but had no money to send us to college, that just appeared as the perfect solution.

MEH: How did—Did you go to public high school?

MBD: I went to public high school, Highland Park High School in the midst of Detroit.

MEH: So, do you remember—Did your family have the sort of background that was orientated toward Progressive Education? Why would she have considered schools like Antioch and Black Mountain as opposed to the regular state schools or more conventional schools?

MBD: My family had a real radical streak. My father was a single-taxer. He was a pagan in his own way. He was also a man who suffered deeply from the Depression, so that he was never successful in his own work, really. From time to time he had successes, but not consistently. My older brother—And that was the other pattern: I followed the pattern of my older brother who went to Antioch. He went to Antioch partly for financial reasons and partly because he was very much interested in getting work experience, and again it was radical. That is, my brother Bill worked for the unions; he edited a union paper; he studied political science. Also, that whole period was leading up to the Second World War, so there was a lot of concern about the U.S. participation in the War and what was going on in Germany. My mother was a member of the Women's International

League for Peace and Freedom, very much concerned about the refugees in Germany. So, I grew up in that kind of an atmosphere. Her father was an Episcopalian bishop, who was called the Red Bishop because of his support of labor unions and his oppositions to child labor.

MEH: So, you were a very socially conscious—

MBD: So, that was a theme in our family, very much so. My parents were completely supportive of our college choices. There was never any, you know, run away and be radical kind of—They were supportive psychologically. They weren't supportive financially. But that was their way.

MEH: What happened—How were things handled financially at Black Mountain?

MBD: I went to school for very little. It's even vague to me how it was handled. I paid my own way, and that's one reason I didn't come for a while. My older sister had been financed by my mother's sister who was independently wealthy, but I was kind of independent of that and I wanted to pay my own way. So, I worked before I came. I worked for two years from high school before I came to Black Mountain. Also that's the reason I didn't consider Antioch because the idea of finally getting on a college campus and being there ten weeks and then going back into the working world was extremely unappealing.

MEH: You'd had your work experience.

MBD: I'd had my work experience. And in fact I dropped out—I mean I had a year-and-half at Black Mountain, and then I came home for the summer and got a job in a war plant, thinking I'd work for the summer and then I was making, it was really— At that point, it was during the War, so I was night shift on a drill press making as

much money as I'd ever made in my life, because of the union and the whole hype about the War and so on. So, again I was making—it was really so helpful financially that I worked for a full year and then went back. So, my experience of Black Mountain spanned a long time, and it had interruptions. When I went to the reunion, I knew people from my sister's class and then much later and then people who'd come back. Because my last summer there was the Music Institute with Elsa Kahl and Fritz Cohen, whom I adored and worked with very closely. That also was the period of the struggle to defend Fran de Graaff and so on. So, that my—wasn't sort of smooth and consistent. It was full of interruptions in an expanded amount of time.

MEH: So going back, the college was at Lake Eden. Was it 1941 that you went?

MBD: I was trying to think about it. It was the fall of '41 was when I first went.

MEH: Did you have any idea what you wanted to study?

MBD: No. (LAUGHTER). I had—I was interested in everything. I had won—it was funny. In high school I had won a scholarship in chemistry. This was all part of how to finance my college, right? My mother had said, "Don't study literature. All women take literature." She was a great reader. She read everything that anybody, any of her children, ever read. But she advised me to go into science in a very calculating way. She wasn't often a calculating person, but she said, "Don't, don't try to get into college on a scholarship in literature, English literature. Do science." So, I did chemistry, which I loved.

MEH: Who was teaching chemistry then?

MBD: Well, this was not at Black Mountain. This was in high school, and I won a chemistry scholarship. On the basis of that, I won a scholarship to a college called Rockport outside of Chicago. It was a very kind of upper-class Bryn Mawr type. They were all girls. So, I spent one weekend there, on the basis of—you know, I was accepted—and so I spent one weekend there and I absolutely knew that I would be miserable, totally miserable. So, I refused the scholarship and went to work and earned money for Black Mountain. When I came there, I was also interested in kind of psychology and sociology and the social sciences. I saw myself—And I was not—Of course, this influenced me a lot. I was not interested in the arts, you know, as a student of the arts—in any way. I never—I was not aware of how important a person Albers was, and so many people came to Black Mountain because of Albers. I came for an academic education. I planned to go to graduate school. My interest was in the social sciences. But at Black Mountain everything was so exciting, and that's one of the reasons it was very important for me to be there because I ended up taking dance, and piano, and a lot of literature, and languages. We did play reading, and it was just extremely important for my own development that I wasn't able to follow out my own narrow initial interests. I'm enormously grateful for that, and I'm also—My advisors, one of them was Elsa Kahl, for a while, one of them was Fran de Graaff, one of them was Erwin Straus because I was in psychology for a while. They were so flexible and open and supportive when I would come in with a totally new idea of what I was going to major in, what I was going to take which would have changed completely from the previous six months from what I was doing. For a while I was

going to study dance, sort of cross-cultural dance and sort of ritual dance and therapeutic dance. That was going to be my integrating idea, and I adored Elsa Kahl. I came into her classes, and I hardly knew my right foot from my left.

MEH: Where did she teach?

MBD: She taught dance.

MEH: But where, where were the classes held?

MBD: In the dining hall, where everything else was held, right? Of course, she came with this just amazing background from being with the Jooss Ballet and with, you know, Fritz writing The Green Table and (UNINTELL). I really worshipped her. For me she had all the kind of elegance and grace and understanding and kind of sophistication that to someone from the Middle West and the Ford Motor capital and the kind of narrow kind of Episcopalian, you know, she was so magical. Also, very patient with me because I was a terrible dancer. I had no background. I had never studied before.

MEH: Who were the other students who were taking dance?

MBD: Oh Ruth Currier, who was one of my very close friends and was of course a wonderful dancer, and came with a dance background and came with a music background and was very young. See, I was twenty and Ruth was seventeen, and that seemed, that gap, that three-year gap, was enormous. At that age it's an enormous difference. Of course Ruthie, whom I still see—she's still a friend—was an ideal student of Fritz and Elsa. She did—I remember when she played the Bartok Duo Piano Concerto with Fritz in the dining hall, and she studied with Elsa. So, that was just extraordinarily fortunate to me in that in another college I

think I would never have been aware and involved in the arts because it was just totally integrated into the community at Black Mountain.

MEH: Do you think if these same teachers had been at another, in a more conventional college, even a college like Antioch or Reed, one of the Progressive schools, do you think you would have made the same contact with them?

MBD: No, absolutely not.

MEH: What do you think the difference was?

MBD: Because it was so small. The most critical—maybe that's an exaggeration, but the size at Black Mountain created connections that as a student I don't think you would have had the courage or the awareness or the opportunity to make those connections. I think that was truly a community. I mean I worked on the work program with Elsa, right? When we were preparing for the Music Institute, Elsa and I set up the bedrooms for the Kolisch Quartet. She was so amazed that I knew how to make electrical extensions, you know, and so appreciative. I think at another school that was larger, she would have been surrounded by wonderful students and I wouldn't have dared expose my clumsiness and my ignorance. I don't think they would have—there wouldn't have been the patience with it.

MEH: Do you think—Certainly the size of the school made a big difference. What do you think the fact that—How do you think the college was affected by the fact that the faculty and students lived and ate together, essentially?

MBD: It's essential. It's essential. I mean the opportunity to have all kinds of informal discussions gave the community a kind of egalitarianism that would never have happened. I mean my awareness of Jalo—Jalowetz and his concern about what

was going on in Germany and how he'd be sad at breakfast. That opened my eyes to what it would be to be a refugee and what was going on in Germany. I had never been to Europe, you know. Their discussions—I came back from Black Mountain with a German accent! German word order. My parents were stunned, you know. Of course, this was my period at Black Mountain. This was the War. So, that we were—Many of us were young Americans, not in tune with Europe, not—kind of provincial Americans that had this opportunity to know a group of Europeans who were there because of the War, suffering in ways that, I think back on, we had no, we were not in touch with. But the fact that I can think back on it and remember their kind of humor and compassion and openness to the kind of naive people we were—right? It shows to me that they were real teachers. They recognized that—how much we needed and how little we knew.

MEH: Did they talk much about what was happening in Europe?

MBD: You know, I'm sure they did among themselves. I think they also held back, because we were so—I mean, I speak personally, but we were not enough in touch with it, right? I think that there were certain people who bridged that. Like there were the—Paco and Leon, who had this romantic—you know, they'd been in the Spanish Revolution, you know. So, they had a closeness to them that those of us who were not from Europe didn't have. Then there were people—there were the other professors like Ted Dreier and Bob Wunsch, and then there was Eric Bentley, who in his own obstreperous way was a very critical, fascinating, inspiring, provoking figure. Then there was Fran de Graaff, who was much more kind of nurturant and, in a way—I mean, Fran had a very special role.

I still see Fran. She was kind of proper compared to some of the Europeans, you know, but she was also a real intellect, and she was also very political. We used to read Marx in her study on Sunday nights. She used to listen to the news in the morning. She was also very motherly for some of us in terms of not having a lot of glamor but having a lot of—I mean she was someone you could go to with more mundane questions, and she was more supportive. Then she taught grammar. She wasn't dealing with—I mean Eric Bentley gave these extraordinary lectures that the whole college went to that I never—and I'd studied a lot of history and I liked history. My brother had been—when he was at Antioch he'd send me lists of books to read, and he told me to read Beard's History of the World, and I read Beard's History of the World from page one to the last page because my brother had told me to read that. But Eric, who was a brilliant lecturer and he was a brilliant thinker, and he had a way of bringing together with a unified theme a historical period so that it would be very inclusive and connected in a very meaningful way. He would connect the economic, the political, the class structure, the drama, the music, the language, the slang—you know. The whole community went to his lectures. I remember—Then he gave a course which was a case study of the rise of Fascism and took country after country, very specifically what had happened between 1900 and 1940 in terms of all the social movements. Fritz and Elsa came, and Jalo came, and it was very, very exciting. For a while I was really his disciple. There were a lot of people that were. It was a small group of people that were Bentley's disciples for a long period of time. I was part of that for a shorter period, partly because I had all

these other interests and partly because I resisted his—He made me uncomfortable. I'm being very candid. He made me—He was too obstreperous for me. He was too—He liked to be the bad boy too much, and I had too much respect for—I mean, for example, for Wunsch and for Ted Dreier, and he played a very—What I look back on is a very distressing, irresponsible role in the big conflict. One of the things he did—I mean he expressed it in various ways. He wanted very, very much to do drama, so—and I'm sure you've heard this from other people but this is my view of it. He wanted very much to direct, he loved plays, we read plays with him, and it was exciting. I mean I just was introduced to all—I remember just all sorts of European dramatists that I didn't know anything about, and, of course, Brecht and Shaw and Pirandello. That really, you could see—I often sort of wondered if he wanted to be an actor, he wanted to be a playwright or something. He was clearly—That was where his heart was. So, of course, Wunsch's own way of directing and his own kind of monopoly of that was a target for Bentley, and he did such things that I look back on with shame. I remember Wunsch did an Elizabethan play—I've forgotten which one it was. Eric said to his little coterie of disciples. He said, "Well let's be an Elizabethan audience." And what does the Elizabethan audience do? It's obstreperous. It belches and farts and makes rude comments and rolls on the floor and so on. He got a lot of people to do it. Well, it was just rude; it was terribly rude. I was with these people, and it was kind of intriguing to me because it was subversive and so on, but then I withdrew just in embarrassment. I remember that evening so clearly, and he kind of took Maya and he put her up over his shoulder, and said,

"I'm going to go home and fuck my wife," you know. It was so—it so offended me, offended Fran, offended—it was just rude. As I look back on it, it was really inexcusable. But there were people who were attracted by it.

MEH: Who were the people who were his most loyal—

MBD: People like Barbara Anderson and Jeanne Wacker and—Those were the two I remember. Ginger Osbourne was kind of out of it. Ruthie was out of it, although she respected him very much. Let's see. Those were kind of—I've forgotten some of their names, sorry. But that as an element in the conflict is not inconsequential. Of course, as it turns out, he was going to leave anyway, you know. So that when those of us who adored Black Mountain and would have stayed at Black Mountain and never thought we would lose—because we were right. That was the first time I learned, really, that you could be right and lose. I've learned it a lot of times since then. He didn't take a responsible position with us. He really didn't, and that was—That was a very complicated situation for Fran.

MEH: Do you think you were completely right, totally right? The other side was completely wrong and totally wrong?

MBD: The process was wrong.

MEH: Now, you're referring to the incident in the summer of '44.

MBD: Right.

MEH: What do you mean?

MBD: For us, it was, you know, just—That's when I left.

MEH: What do you mean by "The process was wrong"?

MBD: The process—Subsequently, I have—I've taught conflict resolution. I've taught communication skills. I've worked with teachers and parents. I do counseling. So many of the things that I now know—and I'm sure it's no accident that I have pursued a lot of these things—I mean, the whole skill of negotiating and so on, and, of course, it's now part of the climate, you know, there's all the work at Harvard on conflict resolution, the popular book. Getting to Yes and all those things. But now that I look back on that period, it polarized so quickly, and there wasn't room for middle ground because of the polarization. I think it could have been solved. I really think it could have been had there been someone there with mediation skills, someone there that would put the survival of the community first. And had it not been, you know, the summer of '44 and the War was still going on, and half the men, all the men had gone. We were—Well, all the men had gone, really. There were three men left, right? Sam Brown, Oppenheimer who was eighteen, and—

MEH: Was Addison Bray still there?

MBD: Addison Bray had left. Erik Haugaard, the boy from Finland. That was it. There was Cynthia Carr, who was in love with Ronnie Boyden, and there was wonderful. Slat, who was in love with Lucian, and Swackhamer came back in his outfit from the ski troupes, right? But that skewed the community in a way that made everything more intense, I think, and so I think, as you say, could it have been avoided? I think—Hindsight is, of course, dirt cheap. But I think had—Also, to this day, I don't know how Albers and Dreier, how much room they had for

compromise, because at that point I didn't know that they had ousted other people, right.

MEH: Not that much.

MBD: And then that there was a subsequent split.

MEH: Right, when they were ousted.

MBD: When they were ousted.

MEH: Right. They resigned, but they were tired.

MBD: So—I'm not really sure. The only previous split had been when Rice, John Rice left, which was a very different situation. The different issues that had been of conflict—the issue of integration had been a source of conflict. These were specific incidents. Then the issue of the girls hitchhiking to visit Bentley and being arrested on the way back. That was a specific incident.

MBD: That was an incident because they used that to get Bentley.

[END OF RECORDING ON SIDE 1, TAPE 1; SIDE 2, TAPE 1 BEGINS]

MBD: Because for them the disc would be very useful, but the list they would have—

MEH: Yes. To type or go through, whatever. Okay, so we were talking about the summer of '44.

MBD: The summer of '44.

MEH: What do you think the relationship between Fran and Eric Bentley—how would you describe their relationship?

MBD: Fran was very supportive of Bentley and Fran ended up defending him. Eric was for himself.

MEH: Do you think he really used Fran?

MBD: Um-hm (AFFIRMATIVE). I think he used Black Mountain. I think he was that kind of a person. He's brilliant and—I think it was very unfortunate that Fran was—the polarization was such that she had to defend him and that his defense of her was to her disadvantage, right? That's what was unfortunate. Fran would have stayed. She was a real educator. Bentley was a scholar and an intellectual and, incidentally, an educator, you know. There's a difference.

MEH: I see her basically as a person who's really cut out for the sort of place Black Mountain was, you know, experimental college, Progressive Education.

MBD: Absolutely.

MEH: I see this as the antithesis of anything that Bentley should have been a part of.

MBD: Bentley wanted desperately—Yes. Fran didn't need prestige. Bentley needed prestige very much. As kind of a British working-class kid, he wanted Harvard, Columbia, right? Fran is a radical, truly radical person, interested in Progressive Education and is someone who would take any student and nurture and teach that student at their level. I mean that's an educator. Bentley was a performer. He gave wonderful lectures. He was absolutely brilliant, and if you got it, fine, and if you didn't get it, too bad, right? So, in that way he was—He was creative. He wanted to write plays. The personalities of that conflict were so kind of unmodifiable, right? That's the other thing. There were the unmodifiable personalities, you know, Albers and Strauss. Then there was the absence of anybody who would put process and the community ahead of their own intense feelings about the identity of Black Mountain—what it should be. Of course, there were so many other areas of conflict. That is, there were those of us—Although

everything I said about being, becoming open to the arts, to music—I mean the music program was just, would never have been in on—Fran and I were talking about it the other day. Open rehearsals of the Schoenberg First Quartet. I would never have taken my time if I'd been in an academic program as I was in graduate school. I mean I know myself. I was in graduate school. I would have heard "Oh, there's an open rehearsal," or something. I wouldn't have gone. At Black Mountain, it was one of my peak experiences to go to that and to have that music become meaningful and have it explained to me. Jalowetz's performances of the Mozart operas. You know—Fritz Cohen's performance. I mean I feel as though I'd seen The Green Table. I saw it subsequently in New York, but I thought I had seen it and it was just... I mean it was just Fritz's description and playing the piano and a few diagrams of the stage set, and Elsa doing some of the choreography, and I feel as though I'd seen it. But what I started to say is that although this art side of Black Mountain was wonderful, and it happened because it was small and because those of us who otherwise would have stayed on the straight and narrow academic were enticed, inspired, and included, and that made it very important. However, we did feel that—One of the things that Black Mountain meant to us was a very, very high-level academic education, and what we saw ourselves as doing is going on to the best graduate schools and kind of validating, at the best graduate schools, that this was education. We saw ourselves as getting into the small group of graduate schools at that point. Toward the end of my career I was in anthropology, and I was very much attracted by—and the idea of going to—at that point there weren't many

anthropology departments. And there'd been another anthropologist under Paul Radin—Roman Maciejczyk. He was killed. But he'd studied with Paul Radin and then gone on to Berkeley. My sister was one of those because Jacques Barzun was her examiner. When he came down for her examination, it was a three-day community event.

MEH: He did examine her at the college?

MBD: Yes. And that was all part of the college. That was all part of validating the college. We were not only validating the college, we were validating progressive education, you know. The idea that it could be autonomous, that it didn't have to be measured, that it didn't have to be competitive, that it had a lot of self-direction to it and could still stand up against—in terms of Ph.Ds. I mean subsequently I have a Ph.D. I subsequently did do this. But our idea was that here this small, unique community that was a learning community would have its method validated by a group of people who would get into graduate school and do well in graduate school and say, "I went to Black Mountain," right? This was our vision of it. So, that we held on to Black Mountain as truly an academic educational institution, if you want to call it even an institution. Fran shared that. I think that some of the other people shared it. I think Fred Mangold probably did. Paul Radin did, whom I didn't know very well. He was there briefly and then he was ousted with a secret letter from a group, right? Which we found out.

MEH: I can't even remember that clearly now.

MBD: I don't know all the details of that either, and it's something I've always wanted to find out more about. But Roman's gone and Paul Radin's gone. My sister was

one of these people because that process was already in place whereby some very prominent professor would come. When Jacques Barzun came to Black Mountain to examine my sister, she was on trial, Black Mountain was on trial, and Jacques Barzun was to be our connection, right? So, if we could find prominent professors at Harvard, at Columbia. At NYU, at Berkeley, right? Who would speak for Black Mountain students who wanted to get into graduate school, that was the process. We saw it as a practical process. My sister—When Jacques Barzun came down, she had an oral exam that people attended. It was preceded by a written exam. Then there was a public lecture by Jacques Barzun, and then we all read Barzun's book. That's the way it was. There were these community events that otherwise you would never have shared, and that's what made it a community. I mean that Betty represented Black Mountain, that Jacques Barzun was our connection, et cetera, right? And that was the process that we kind of took for granted would happen. I mean Clark Foreman, who was also—He was also very much interested in the integration and everything, in political things, but he was also a realist in terms of you have to have an undergraduate progressive education that leads to graduate school, for people who want graduate school.

MEH: The Ivy League schools did accept Black Mountain graduates.

MBD: Some of them did, yes. Don Page I know (OVERTALK). That's of course what I planned to do, but I didn't graduate.

MEH: Going back, there are a lot of things I'd like to cover. We'll have to talk again.

What do you remember about Clark Foreman? Was he there when you were there?

MBD: Yes. Oh, yes.

MEH: First, did you take any courses with him?

MBD: I think so. I took a course—When I passed Junior Division to Senior Division, one of the areas of concentration I had invented for myself was American Civilization. This was sort of an anthropological view of American civilization, it would include history, sociology, culture. I did a lot of reading with him. Also, I was very much involved with him in terms of integration, because the woman who came there—I met her again at the reunion—

MEH: Oh, Alma. Alma Stone Williams.

MBD: Alma Stone, yes. I remember she was my roommate. I mean there were eight of us who were roommates. You know, it was—For me, of course, having come from Detroit, it was almost incidental. The idea that it would be segregated was just something that I was surprised at. Of course, it should be integrated. Black Mountain should be integrated. So, I was part of favoring that and being Alma's roommate. But it was such a minor issue to me in a way. That is, of course, it should happen and it did happen and now let's go on with what we're doing. I didn't realize until the reunion how special it was. Of course, the other thing that happened is that I never left Black Mountain. I mean, I arrived at Black Mountain. I had no car. I had no money. And I had no reason. I never went to Asheville—I went to Asheville once to the dentist. I never went to town. Ted Dreier picked me

up at the bus when I came from Detroit, and when I left, he took me back to the bus. So, that in terms of the South, I didn't really know the South. As I say, I came back with a German accent. The one Southerner I knew was Ruthie Currier. So, for that to be—Of course, my high school had been totally integrated. So, I wasn't aware until I reviewed some of the material on Black Mountain that first of all, what an important thing it was that that happened. Second, that there was really a lot of opposition to it, apparently. [INTERRUPTION IN TAPING] I knew Clark—I knew the family. I think I used to babysit for Hugh. That was the other thing I as part of my working for Black Mountain—I had done a lot of work in childcare—I'd been a babysitter all through high school, and I had been an assistant teacher in a private school for a year. So, I got to be known as someone who had childcare skills, and I guess it's no accident that I'm now in child psychology. I knew Clark's little boy, Hugh, and I used to take care of him, and he was a powerful little boy. I also sensed that Clark was sort of en route. I mean he was at Black Mountain for just a short period of time, and because of that, the work of the Southern Congress Leadership Committee—the SCLC, right?—was foremost for him.

MEH: What sort of personality was Clark Foreman?

MBD: Very direct. Very kind of American direct. Not particularly interested in the arts, I would guess. Very—No, he was—He was concerned with integration. I know it was because of him I read certain books like Clay's—this wonderful book by Clay on the South. That was his controlling and almost exclusive interest, you might say. I mean, I (UNINTELL) now, I don't even know how long he was there.

MEH: A couple of years.

MBD: Was he there a couple of years?

MEH: Maybe three. At least two.

MBD: Really. At least two. That's interesting because I don't remember him working on the work program. He had little children, and I think he spent a lot of time with his family, not in the dining hall. That's my impression. I liked him. I liked him very much. I think he influenced me. When I left Black Mountain and then went to Wayne, I worked with integrating the restaurants around the city and things like that, and I'm sure part of that was the influence of Clark Foreman.

MEH: What do you remember about the hitchhiking incident? What is your recollection of that incident?

MBD: Well, they were my friends.

MEH: Jeannie Wacker and—

MBD: Bobbie Anderson. They were kind—They were Bentley disciples, and I had pulled away from that, so that's why I wasn't close to them. I didn't know much about it until Fran talked with me about it and how everybody was so upset, and they'd been arrested. She kind of talked with me about what I thought should happen. Hitchhiking to me was a perfectly ordinary thing to do. My brother hitchhiked all the time, and my sister, when she was there she hitchhiked. You know, hitchhiking was not the least bit something that was unacceptable. The fact that they—I remember talking to Jeanne about being arrested. They were very excited about it, you know. It was kind of an adventure for them. I think we had no idea that it would be so shocking for the faculty. I think they probably

exaggerated it, as a way to get Bentley. Fran tells me there were discussions in the faculty meeting about whether these two girls were virgins or not, and Fran said the faculty was very shocked. She was expecting most of the, many of the young women there were not virgins. This was, you know, kind of an issue for Lowinsky and Straus and it was a total non-issue for Fran or Bentley. Certainly, it was an anomaly in this college where the only rule was you don't go through a Do Not Disturb sign, in which there were no hours, no kind of *in loco parentis* protection of the freshmen's virginity. I remember when I was—The first year I was there, my high school boyfriend was in the marines, and I went over somewhere not too far away—maybe, I don't even know—but he was stationed there, and I went over and stayed overnight with him and came back. Elsa said to me, "Are you all right?" And I said, "I'm fine," and that's all she said. She was my advisor, you know. So, that to me it was—I never dreamed this would be such a huge issue, some kind of a wild thing that Wacker and Bobbie and (INAUDIBLE) had done.

MEH: I think it was—The act of hitchhiking in itself may not have been so bad, even though for girls who hitchhike in the South it was a risky thing.

MBD: But not in the North.

MEH: Yes, but they were not hitchhiking in the North. They were hitchhiking in the South.

MBD: That's right, but we weren't in the South in so many ways. We were at Black Mountain.

MEH: But you were in the South in so many ways.

MBD: Of course, that's right.

MEH: The fact that if Ted Dreier had not gone and pulled as many strings as he could to have gotten them out of jail, they could have received serious sentences.

MBD: Oh, it would have been terrible.

MEH: It wasn't a joke, you know. That's where I have a conflict, you know. It was a serious situation for the girls, and I always have this conflict because I can get very upset with the—I don't really see Dreier and Albers as the same mentality as Lowinsky and Straus, at all.

MBD: Oh, no. I don't either.

MEH: But they were constantly just sort of overburdened with this having to keep things going, having to deal with these problems, whatever. So, here Ted Dreier gets on the bus, goes all the way to Chattanooga, calls all the people he can find, you know, to try to get these girls out of jail. Because prostitution is a serious charge. Then he gets them back and there's no thank you. It's just vindic—they sort of spit in his face.

MBD: They did?

MEH: Yes. It's like, you know, "so it was just a joke!" But it was a serious situation they were in, and if—And also to say, you know, "Well, hitchhiking in the North—" I mean I hitchhiked all over Europe and—I would never hitchhike in the South. It's just not—I mean I wouldn't hitchhike anywhere today.

MBD: No, I wouldn't either.

MEH: But this was a different time. So, they really were—They were hitchhiking in the South.

MBD: You see, I didn't understand—I mean some of what you're telling me even now is new. That is, I never gave it the seriousness—I remember talking to Wacker and she said when they were in jail the—there were a lot of black women in jail and they kept saying, "Hey, white girl. Hey, white girl. Hey, white girl." And Wacker thought they were saying, "Hey Wacker!" Right? They came back—See, I didn't know how serious it was, and how Ted, how significant it was that Ted had rescued them, literally.

MEH: He literally did. It was a serious situation, which doesn't say that—the way it was handled by the judge, the way it was handled by the courts, the way it was handled by the police was horrible. But it was—

MBD: It was serious.

MEH: It was serious. And the situation existed at that point.

MBD: But the fact also is that Black Mountain did not—The freedom of Black Mountain was so powerful and pervasive that they weren't defying a rule, right? Which is interesting. That is, they didn't—Have you talked to either of them?

MEH: No, I would really like to.

MBD: It would be very interesting. Jeanne subsequently became—She totally shifted—

MEH: Right.

MBD: I saw her at that period, and I was just kind of horrified. The only way I could explain it to myself is that she'd been a disciple, and now she was a disciple of Sidney Hook. I felt very sad about it, and then I didn't see her after that. And then Bobbie of course married the head of—

MEH: Dupee?

MBD: Dupee, yes. She married the head of, what was that college?

MEH: Where was this? I'm not sure.

MBD: It begins with "B." It was rather like Black Mountain.

MBD: I'm not sure. I'll think of it. I can't think of it now. It may not even be—Anyway, not Bennington. But there was another college.

MEH: Bard?

MBD: Bard. Yes. He was the head of Bard.

MBD: What I'm going to do is—Let's stop for the day.

[END OF RECORDING ON SIDE 2, TAPE 1]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]