

BARNARD COLLEGE CLASS OF 1971 ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

The Reminiscences of

Carolyn J. Lewis

2015

## PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Carolyn J. Lewis conducted by Frances Garrett Connell on August 3, 2015. This interview is part of the Barnard Class of 1971 Oral History Project.

The reader is asked to bear in mind that s/he is reading a verbatim transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

Barnard Alumni Class of 1971 Oral History Project

Interviewee: Carolyn J. Lewis

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Frances Garrett Connell

Date: August 3, 2015

00:00:00 Q: This interview is taking place with Carolyn [J.] Lewis, on August 3, 2015, at the offices of Google in New York City. This is for the Barnard College Voices Oral History Project, and the interviewer is Frances Connell. Okay, Carolyn. First of all, thank you for inviting me into this austere place. [Laughs] It's a fascinating area.

00:00:25 Lewis: We made it austere, didn't we? [Laughs]

00:00:27 Q: And, and for being willing to be a part of this whole project. So, we usually start at the beginning.

00:00:37 Lewis: Okay.

00:00:38 Q: And start by asking you a little bit about your family, where you come from, and your childhood, and we'll go from there.

00:00:45 Lewis: Okay. Well, my name is Carolyn Jeanne Lewis. I was born on July 25, 1949. Christmas in July in Missoula, Montana. So, I think that, in our Barnard class, I was the only one from Montana. Although a couple of other Montanans did follow me during the time I was at Barnard. So, I didn't feel quite so much alone at the time. I was born to George and Jeanne

Lewis, my parents, who were both music students at the University of Montana. My father was a singer. My mother is a pianist. She's still living. She's almost eighty-nine years old. Still pretty sharp, the way she has always been.

And my life and their lives revolved around music. My dad, being a singer, was very fortunate to team up with my mother, who was his accompanist. And they fell in love as students traveling around Montana doing music programs with the University of Montana Music School. They also came from the same fundamentalist Christian background, which very much shaped what they grew to rebel against. I would say that, that was a very important part of my upbringing, in that even though we were in church all the time, it was because there was a choir directing job to be had, or there was a musical program to put together. My parents were never especially religious. Maybe spiritual in their own way, but not religious. And that did cause some conflict within their own families. Although my mom and dad were careful never to let it affect my brother and me.

I had one younger brother, three and a half years younger. Actually, when I was born—this was before the days when you knew the sex of the child that was coming—everyone was expecting a boy. So, when I was born, the name I was to be given was Clifton George Lewis [laughs]. Well, so here were my mom and dad stuck with this baby girl, and, “Oh my goodness, what do we name this baby girl? We haven't even thought of a girl's name.” [Laughs] So my father's two younger sisters, who at the time were in junior high and high school, came to visit Jeanne with the new baby—first grandchild on that side of the family—and they were all excited, and my mom said, “What are the names of all your friends? We have to find a name for this baby.” [Laughs] And one of my Aunt Twila and Aunt Shirley's best friends was named Carolyn, so I

was named after the best friend of my aunts. The Jeanne is a family name. My mother's middle name is also Jeanne. And then Lewis. Well, three and a half years later, when my brother came along, there was the Clifton George Lewis.

[Laughs] But, to this day, I love to joke with my brother, because, according to family lore, I was about three and a half years old when he was born, and I was walking down the street with my mom one day, and she was very pregnant with my brother, and she said, "Honey, what shall we do when the new baby comes?" Well, I had my heart set on a baby sister. [Laughs] So, I said, "Oh, a baby sister, baby sister." And she said, "what if it's not a baby sister? What if you get a baby brother?" [Laughs] And I said, "Well, then I'd rather have a tricycle." [Laughs]

00:04:41 Q: [Laughs] Perfect.

00:04:43 Lewis: So, to this day, my brother jokes about how [laughs] he still owes me a tricycle. [Laughs] I wanted a trike if I couldn't have a baby sister. [Laughs] And I never did get the baby sister, so.

00:04:57 Q: Did you get the trike? [Laughs]

00:04:58 Lewis: Eventually I did. Yes, thank you. I did. [Laughs] But not right away. I had to wait for it. Maybe I had to earn it. Anyway. So, I had a very happy childhood. I guess, you know, not to be trite, but I did. I felt loved. I felt wanted. I was expected to behave as a small child, because my parents were poor music teachers. They couldn't afford babysitters all the time. So, I

spent many hours on Wednesday nights going to choir practice. I spent many hours on Thursday nights accompanying them to the chorale rehearsals, and I learned to, kind of, sit with my coloring books and my toys [laughs] and play quietly while I listened to all this music. And I loved it. As I got a little older, and once my brother came along, my babysitters were my mother's piano students. And, oh, I loved my babysitters. They would sit and read stories to me, and I still remember some of my favorites. I mean, they were these beautiful young girls—some of them were boys—who studied piano with my mom. So, I would see them come and take their piano lesson, and then, I'd say to my mother, "When are you going someplace?" [Laughs]

00:06:15 Q: Oh, yeah.

00:06:16 Lewis: Because I loved my babysitters. They were all great kids. When I think of it now—and that's how they earned their piano lessons, was by babysitting for me and my brother.

00:06:26 Q: It's a good set up [laughs].

00:06:27 Lewis: And this was, kind of, back in the days in Montana, too, when a lot of people wanted their kids to have music lessons, but they didn't have cash to pay for it. So, I can remember my mom taking milk and bread and eggs in exchange for piano lessons from farm kids. And, it was—at the time, you don't think much of it, but now that I look back at it, I think it was pretty important stuff. I always had lots of friends. Quite often, I was the smartest kid in the class. I think that happened to a lot of our Barnard classmates.

00:07:07 Q: Now, were you in a public school, or—?

00:07:09 Lewis: Public school. I went to my first and second grades in Helena, Montana, which is where my dad's first real job was out of college. He was the high school chorus director. And, my dad was very good. My dad was also an athlete in college. He played football. He loved sports. He just loved sports, and he was instrumental in getting a lot of the public schools in Montana to actively recruit boys to be in music. My dad would cut a deal with the high school football coach that if he would send over enough tenors for him to have a real glee club, then my dad would make sure that the band and the chorus were always ready to go for the football games [laughs]. So, I can remember going to football practice when I was a little kid with my dad. He'd go and check in on his boys, make sure that they were, you know, playing their roles and they were doing well, and, "By the way, don't forget. We have a concert, you know, between your next two games. Better be there." And so, I also grew up in an environment where it was really not gender specific. I mean, you were expected to have boys as friends, girls as friends, everything like that, because we were all doing things together.

Music was very much a team effort. And I would say that, having come from an era before girls

really participated in organized sports, music was where I learned how to be part of a team.

Music was where I learned to compete. All the lessons I ever learned about being part of a group, being part of a team, being part of a duo came from my music training.

00:09:06 Q: And what was that, specifically?

00:09:09 Lewis: I initially played the piano when I was little.

00:09:12 Q: And did you actually take lessons from your mother or from—?

00:09:15 Lewis: I did, but it didn't work out very well. You know, I couldn't separate the fact that she was my mom, at that young age. So, she cut a deal with the other piano teachers in towns, and they would trade kids. She would teach their kids, and then, the other piano teacher would teach my brother and me. Worked very well. I mean, my parents were always open to, "How are we going to fix this problem?" [Laughs] So, um, yeah.

We were in Helena, Montana my first two years of school, first and second grade. Then, we moved to Havre, Montana, which is up in the north central part of the state near the Canadian border. But it was part of the University of Montana. So, it was my dad's chance to go from secondary school teaching to college teaching. We were there for two years in Havre. You know, I learned to fly a kite there [laughs]. I learned to get a sheet of cardboard and slide down the hill with my friends. I walked to school every day in the winter in twenty degree below weather [laughs], and my mom would say, "Bundle up, honey. See you later." [Laughs] And you know, she'd send me out the door. I had my first dog there. A little mix-breed, German shepherd collie mix named Mickey, and loved her. Loved that dog.

And then, after two years in Havre, my parents were ready to do some graduate work. So, in the summer, they came to New York City, and my dad did graduate work at Teachers College at



Columbia. So, what do you do with the two little kids? You ship them off to the aunt and uncle's ranch in eastern Montana.

00:11:00 Q: Oh my goodness.

00:11:01 Lewis: So, my brother and I spent our summers with my aunt and uncle on their cattle ranch in eastern Montana, where we watered the chickens, we gathered the eggs, we weeded the garden. [Laughs] We worked hard.

00:11:17 Q: You worked hard. Yeah.

00:11:18 Lewis: Yeah. But again, you know, as a—when you're a kid on the farm, you're expected to contribute and you do your chores. Anytime you worked with animals, the animals are taken care of first. You feed the chickens and you water the chickens before you eat your own breakfast. And, you know, you make sure the horses have their feed. You make sure the cows are milked. You do all that stuff before you do anything for yourself.

00:11:50 Q: Right.

00:11:51 Lewis: So, those were great ways to spend the summer too. So, my folks spent two summers in New York City in the late fifties. My dad was working on his master's degree. And, then, they'd come home, and we'd be a family together and go on with our lives as town kids, not country kids.

In the summer of 1959, my parents spent the summer in France. They went to the School of Fine Arts in Fontainebleau, France, which was actually set up by the French government after World War II as a thank you to the U.S. It was for American, professional music students to come and study with all the master teachers within the field of music and art. So, my parents spent the summer of '59 in Fontainebleau, France, and traveled throughout Europe. Clifton and I were back on the ranch [laughs], which was fine with us, you know. We had cousins about our age. We had a wonderful time.

And then, just before my folks came back from France, my dad got a call from the University of Montana in Missoula, which was his alma mater, saying, "We have a job for you. Come get it." No interview. No audition. Nothing. But one of his mentors there, who had taught him, said this was a perfect job for dad. And that's basically where I grew up after that. Age ten on was Missoula. It was a college town. Still is. Politically and religiously very liberal compared to the rest of Montana. But it was perfect for a family like mine. My parents were always really intellectually engaged. They had lots of opinions about the value of education, the value of the arts, the value of learning things, figuring things out. And it was from Missoula I did the rest of grade school, all of high school, and then, I went off to Barnard.

00:13:58 Q: And what was the set up there, in terms of your house? Can you remember what your street looked like or special friends?

00:14:03 Lewis: Oh, yeah. Yeah. 510 East Beckwith Avenue. Just a half a block from the University of Montana campus.

00:14:11 Q: Oh, my. Yeah.

00:14:12 Lewis: Little, three bedroom, two bath bungalow. Two cats, [laughs] Shima and Saki, two Siamese cats, who again, I loved dearly. Our dog Mickey, actually, ended up on the ranch. Because, poor little thing, it's about a three hundred, four hundred mile car ride from Havre to eastern Montana where the ranch was. And we took her with us one Christmas for two weeks, and the poor little dog threw up all the way because she got carsick.

00:14:42 Q: Wait. It's three or four hundred miles?

00:14:43 Lewis: Yeah.

00:14:44 Q: Wow. Big state.

00:14:45 Lewis: Montana is a huge state. It's a huge state. [Laughs] I don't know if it's that far, but it seemed like it with this poor, little, sick dog. Anyway, so, my aunt and uncle needed a dog. You know ranchers and farmers need dogs. They are their early warning systems. And Mickey was the best dog for a bunch of kids. She was great with kids. She was great with other animals. She loved cats. She loved cattle. She loved horses. She loved everything. So, Mickey stayed

behind on the ranch, and so, we didn't have our dog anymore. So, when we got to Missoula, we got two cats, and they were a very important part of our lives.

The house we lived in was modest but really comfy. Close to the university campus, close enough to my grade school that we could walk, close enough to my high school that I could walk. The only—when I was in high school, the only kids that were actually bussed to school came from a small town over fifty miles away. At the time, it was the longest school bus ride in the U.S. [Laughs] These poor high-schoolers from Seeley Lake would have to get on the school bus at about five a.m. and go, like, two hours during the winter if the roads were bad to go to school. I always felt kind of bad for them, because they could only come to school and then go home. They couldn't participate in any extra-curricular activities. Many of them came from very poor families. Seeley Lake was a lumber town.

00:16:26 Q: Oh, okay.

00:16:27 Lewis: It had a lumber mill. They came from relatively poor families, and, as soon as they got old enough to leave school, a lot of them left school. They never even finished high school.

00:16:36 Q: Now, were they of a particular ethnicity that it settled as a—?

00:16:39 Lewis: No. Mostly, uh—

00:16:40 Q: —lumber people?

00:16:41 Lewis: Not really. If you go to other places in Montana—in Butte, for instance, which was a big mining district, you had a lot of Eastern Europeans and Irish people who worked in the mines. A lot of Italians. Missoula, interestingly, had a fairly substantial Greek Orthodox population and Italian population, because Fort Missoula, which was, I believe, a U.S. Army fort, was used as an internment camp during World War II for Italian merchant marine [laughs] and cruise ship employees that got caught on the wrong side of the pond when war was declared.

00:17:27 Q: I had never heard of that before.

00:17:29 Lewis: Yeah. It's an interesting part of Missoula's history, and many of those men—and they were all men, because they were working either on cruise ships or merchant marines. Some of them were working at an Italian big expo that was here in New York City. They were interned, and they were sent to Montana, and that was where they spent the rest of the war. A lot of them stayed, married local women, Italian and otherwise, and basically, never went home to Italy except to visit [laughs].

00:18:01 Q: They liked us that much.

00:18:02 Lewis: Yeah. [Laughs]

00:18:03 Q: Amazing.

00:18:04 Lewis: Yeah. I guess they liked Missoula. It was a nice place.

00:18:10 Q: And you're right near—aren't you near Glacier National Park?

00:18:12 Lewis: A couple hundred miles south.

00:18:14 Q: Oh, it's another couple hundred miles south.

00:18:15 Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah. Yeah. Glacier National Park is up in the northwestern part of the state. Yellowstone Park is south central. And Missoula is right about there.

00:18:23 Q: Oh, Missoula's in the middle. Okay. Okay.

00:18:24 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. We're in the mountains. We're not out in the Great Plains.

00:18:27 Q: Oh, okay. Okay And being so close to the university, do you remember particular—I don't know what I'm trying to say. I guess, cultural events, or intellectual things?

00:18:39 Lewis: Oh, absolutely.

00:18:40 Q: —that you were privy to and other kids wouldn't have been, probably.

00:18:43 Lewis: Yeah. In fact, I think as faculty brats [laughs]—I was a faculty brat, not an army brat or some—my dad was on the faculty, so I was a faculty brat. We had a lot of privileges. We could get into the university swimming pool for ten cents instead of twenty-five cents. We could go ice-skating on the ice rink for ten cents instead of twenty-five cents. That sort of thing. My dad and mom were always involved in community music things, as well as professional and academic music things.

So, my dad founded the Missoula Symphony Chorale in 1960, and my mother was the accompanist. I was not really a vocalist, since I wanted to learn to play the cello. And so, where I was lucky is, I got to study cello with the professor who taught cello at the university. And my brother learned the violin from another one.

00:19:39 Q: And you started, what, at age ten?

00:19:41 Lewis: At about age ten.

00:19:42 Lewis: Yeah.

00:19:43 Q: I love that instrument.

00:19:44 Lewis: So, I was already playing the piano with these other teachers, and then, I added the cello. And, Missoula had a very active music program in the public schools. So, from age ten on, I played in an orchestra. I played in the grade school orchestra. The lower level one, for a

while, and then, made my way up. But that's also where I met many of my lifelong friends. They were other kids that were learning to play instruments. In fact, I think, one of the greatest joys in my life back then was the whole teamwork, making music with my friends.

00:20:18 Q: So, you always loved it?

00:20:19 Lewis: I always loved it. I hated to practice, though.

00:20:20 Q: [Laughs] You were a child still.

00:20:21 Lewis: I loved playing. I hated to practice. I only practiced if I had to. I had to be nagged to practice. But you know what's really interesting is, had I known why you had to practice, other than it was just your piano teacher being mean to you, that it was to train your muscles, and train your brain, and train the muscle patterns, and put it in your muscle memory—I was a very analytical, reasonable kid. I could have been appealed to with that sort of reasoning. But it took me forty, fifty years to figure it out [laughs]. You know, it's like, in fact, I had this discussion with my mother once. I said, “You know, mom, remember how you used to have to nag me to practice the piano and the cello?” She said, “Yeah. I couldn't understand that.” I said, “If you had known at the time to say, ‘Honey, the reason you need to practice those scales is not because the teacher's being mean to you. It's because it's to train your fingers so that you can do those fast runs up and down the piano, or it's to train your left hand to play the chords, and play them with even pressure with all the fingers.’” I said, “If I had known that, I might have been more interested in practicing.” [Laughs] Well, my mom didn't—when she was young and



studied piano, she loved to practice. [Laughs] That was her form of playing. So, she never made that connection with me. She somehow made it with her other students. She taught other students for years and years and years.

I guess, the big surprise to a lot of people, given that I was so involved in music—the big surprise to a lot of people, when I went off to college and then later in life, is that I didn't keep it up as— “Oh, you were so good. Why didn't you do it? You didn't do that.” I just, I continued it at Barnard. I played in the Columbia University Orchestra for four years. I sang in the Barnard/Columbia chorus our freshman year. But then, you know, your studies get busy. You know, you kind of have to prioritize. I did play the cello in the orchestra all four years I was at Barnard and Columbia, and loved it. But then, I went off to grad school, and I just, kind of, lost interest.

And that always puzzled me, too, because at the time, I loved it. And it wasn't until I read an article a couple years ago in Opera News, actually, about a young conductor they were interviewing. He said—the question was asked, “At what point did you realize that this was going to be your vocation, not just an avocation?” And he said, “It was right around the end of high school.” He said, “I realized that— what I really loved about music? Was it the music itself, or was it making music with my friends, or was it this? I now look back at it, and as ingrained as the arts and music are in my body, what I really loved was making music with my friends.” And when that was gone, it was, like, I lost interest.

00:23:37 Q: Yeah.

00:23:38 Lewis: Yeah.

00:23:39 Q: But you said you've kept up with a lot of those friends.

00:23:40 Lewis: I've kept up with all my old high school friends.

00:23:42 Q: Have others become musicians, or—?

00:23:43 Lewis: One of them has. One of them, my friend, Sharon Gillespie, lives in Boulder, Colorado. She's been teaching violin privately all her life, basically. Now, she had to have day jobs to help support it. You know, she worked as a medical technician in one of the hospitals, and she's had various jobs over the years. But she has made it her life's work to teach other people, violin. She's gotten into Scandinavian folk dancing and folk bands and stuff. And she's the one who has my cello. I give it to her years ago, because she wanted to learn to play. And I said, "Sharon, I'll never play the cello again."

00:24:26 Q: Oh, no.

00:24:27 Lewis: "I want it to have a good home. I know you'll take care of it." And she's got my cello, and she plays it.

00:24:34 Q: Oh, that's wonderful.

00:24:35 Lewis: So, I'm happy. I'm happy. It makes me happy.

00:24:37 Q: Cellos are very precious.

00:24:38 Lewis: Yeah.

00:24:39 Q: Now, were there particular music, composers, pieces that you remember? That you particularly enjoyed, or—?

00:24:48 Lewis: The high school orchestra that I played in, the Missoula County High School Orchestra—again, we benefitted by having fabulous music teachers in town. A lot of really talented kids who studied. We got to play grown-up music. And we were pretty well known within the region as being much beyond a high school level.

00:25:10 Q: Oh my. Yeah.

00:25:11 Lewis: We played a lot of [Antonín Leopold] Dvořák, which, you know, the romantic soul in all of us just loved. We played a lot of [Jakob Ludwig Felix] Mendelssohn, [Ludwig van] Beethoven. We played—except for the very difficult avant garde contemporary pieces, we played grown up music. We played it. And, we did it well, and we loved it. And we'd travel around the state, and we'd have high school orchestra festivals. And the Missoula County High School Orchestra was always the best [laughs].

00:25:42 Q: Yeah.

00:25:43 Lewis: Yeah. But we had these advantages that other towns in Montana did not have. And, it was great fun.

My sophomore year, we all took babysitting jobs, and house cleaning jobs, and dog sitting jobs, and snow shoveling jobs to earn money, so we could all get on the train and travel to Portland, Oregon for the Music Educators National Conference, the regional meeting, where we were part of the last day. We played Dvořák's New World Symphony.

00:26:17 Q: Oh my goodness. That's amazing.

00:26:18 Lewis: That was, again—it was being with, people who you shared the interest, but lots of different people. The other advantage to being, I found, in music was that you got to know students from the other classes. Not just your own high school class. You got to know the seniors, the juniors, the freshmen, the sophomores. And so, even to this day, I have friends that—otherwise, had I just been going to school and been in class all the time, I never would have gotten to know them.

So, it was a real treat to me, actually, to go to Barnard and be matched up with my roommate, who was Severine Neff.

00:26:58 Q: Oh, yes. A musician.

00:26:59 Lewis: Yeah. A fabulous musician. Much more intense than I could ever have imagined. I mean, she'd gone to the Juilliard Prep Division. She was a brilliant pianist. She was a lot of fun. I just loved Sev. We roomed together for four years.

00:27:17 Q: Oh, that's great.

00:27:18 Lewis: And we were great, wonderful friends and really compatible roommates. And I could, kind of, admire her from afar, with her total devotion to music, you know, both as an intellectual pursuit and everything. She was really not—she'd kind of done the performing. I think she was done with that. She wanted to compose. She wanted to learn music theory. She was very much into the intellectual analysis side of music, and was quite a scholar. And she was one of our three—do you remember the senior scholar program?

00:27:53 Q: Yeah.

00:27:54 Lewis: Sev was one of—I think, we had three senior scholars.

00:27:56 Q: Yeah, there were three. Pat Auspos, myself, and her.

00:27:58 Lewis: Oh, you too! Okay.

00:27:59 Q: Yes, I was writing the great American novel.

00:28:00 Lewis: Okay.

00:28:01 Q: I didn't do quite as well as the others [laughs].

00:28:03 Lewis: Yeah? Okay, Pat. Right. And Pat.

00:28:04 Q: But it was a great year. But yeah. But Sev—I mean, she was amazing.

00:28:06 Lewis: Yeah.

00:28:07 Q: She was amazing. Yeah. And she was your roommate. Oh that's—

00:28:11 Lewis: She was my roommate for four years. Yeah.

00:28:13 Q: Well, you were a good match.

00:28:14 Lewis: Yeah, we were. We were a good match. But, you know, the Montana angle was really, kind of, funny when it came to Sev. I don't know if you remember that when we were freshmen, and those of us who were going to live in the dorms, the admissions office and the housing office made an effort to match up compatible people. So, you filled out these questionnaires. Do you smoke? No. If you do, how much? You know, a lot of our classmates

were smokers back then. Do you sleep with the window open or with the window closed? I thought, “That’s weird. Why does it matter?” [Laughs] But, you know, I said, “Either one is fine with me. No, I don’t smoke. Never smoked.” And so, I got matched up with Sev, and then, they gave us each other’s addresses, and we corresponded for about a month before we actually met at Barnard.

00:29:05 Q: And she was coming from New York? Where was she coming from?

00:29:07 Lewis: Connecticut. Naugatuck, Connecticut.

00:29:08 Q: She was—yeah. Yeah. Okay.

00:29:09 Lewis: And she also came from a very different background than I did. She came from a Polish immigrant family. She was very aware of those issues. I knew nothing. I mean, I was clueless when it came to stuff like that, you know, ethnic groups and all that. That was all new to me. Everybody in Montana, except for the Native Americans, who at the time were did not get much or publicity, pretty much everybody was, kind of, generic white bread sort of thing. And that’s why, I think, the fact that my family traveled, my family was in the arts, it helped me because I wasn’t stuck with just a one-dimensional view of other people.

New York was the perfect place for me to come to school. I just loved going to school in New York. I met Sev. I met my other good friends, Judith Schnitman and Lynne Haims, and Phyllis

Lefton. And, we kind of made a little family of ourselves in the dorms. We had a lot of fun. We supported each other. We stayed in touch.

00:30:23 Q: Yeah, Lynne mentioned you, in particular. I mean, she was part of that group, and she was so happy. She kept saying, “I finally found my people.” [Laughs]

00:30:29 Lewis: Yes. Yes.

00:30:30 Q: “And we stayed together.” So it meant a lot to her.

00:30:32 Lewis: I found— one thing that still puzzles me to this day is how many of my Barnard classmates were really unhappy in high school. Lynne, especially. She said she—you know, how many hated high school, or how many of them felt, as outcasts or something. I never had that experience. I was always part of a group. I was part of the speech team, or the orchestra, or string quartet with my very best friends. I always had friends in my homeroom, in my classes. I was always conscious of being one of the smartest kids in the class. And back then, if you—

00:31:12 Q: And were you tracked at that school? I mean, was there, like, the accelerated section, the A section, or was it just—?

00:31:19 Lewis: our first two years, yes. Our English—

00:31:22 Q: I mean, we were the Sputnik generation. Yeah.



00:31:23 Lewis: —classes and our math classes were—yeah. They were tracked. You had the—now that I think back at it, it's really awful. [Laughs] People were not politically correct back then. They had the A section, they had the regular section, and they had the D section. And if you were put in one of those sections, it's kind of like a caste system. You could not break out of it. I mean, I still have a friend, one of my friends, who was put in the regular section instead of the A section in English, and she still remembers that. Like, how could that have happened to me? And it never happened to me. I was very lucky, but, I now realize that probably wasn't the right way to approach a lot of the kids.

00:32:11 Q: I'm sure it was very traumatic. I had a friend like that as well [laughs].

00:32:15 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. But I got to Barnard. I made very good friends pretty quickly. I guess, here's the best story about going to Barnard. Did you know Wilma Liebman in our class?

00:32:30 Q: Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. Yeah.

00:32:31 Lewis: If it weren't for Wilma Liebman, I would not have met my husband. Tom Browder, Columbia College '69 from Missoula, Montana [laughs].

00:32:43 Q: Oh my goodness.

00:32:44 Lewis: During our freshman year, our freshman orientation, you may remember we went to seminars and stuff. Well, I went to a seminar, and I—because they always seated us alphabetically, I sat next to Wilma Liebman. Carolyn Lewis. And I think it was somebody like Barry Ulanov or something—

00:33:04 Q: Oh, good old Barry.

00:33:05 Lewis: —talking about The Beatles and “Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” [laughs] and this and that. Thought, “Whoa, this is weird stuff, but I really like it. Okay, if this is what Barnard’s all about, I’m in.” So, I’m sitting, and Wilma and I are talking. She’s from Philadelphia. She’s an only child. Her father’s a lawyer. And, you know, I’m this exotic thing from Montana without a cowboy hat. And we struck up a conversation, and just really, kind of, hit it off.

That night, in Ferris Booth Hall, the Columbia juniors had a dance for the Barnard freshmen. And so, Lynne and Sev and Judy and I all went over there and instantly became the wall flowers we were convinced that we really were. And about halfway through the evening, here comes Wilma holding this boy by the hand. [Laughs] She’s kind of dragging him along. She’s going, “Carolyn. Carolyn!” [Laughs] I said, “Hi. Hi, Wilma. How are you?” She says, “This boy says he’s from Missoula too!” [Laughs] And I looked at him, and I said the ultimate insult. I said, “Oh. I didn’t know there were any other freshmen from Missoula.” And he looks at me. He says, “I’m a junior.” [Laughs] And it was Tom Browder [laughs].

00:34:20 Q: Oh my goodness.

00:34:21 Lewis: The next week, he called me up [laughs] to go out to a movie. Said, “Hi, this is Tom Browder.” Says, “I’ve been assigned to check up on all the freshmen from Montana.”

00:34:34 Q: I love it.

00:34:35 Lewis: I fell for it. I didn’t know I was the only freshman from Montana. Not only Missoula. So, he says, “Would you like to go to a movie?” I said, “Sure. I’m not doing anything else.” [Laughs] So, I did. The next morning, I see Wilma. I see Wilma at breakfast, and I said, “Hey, Wilma. Remember Tom Browder, that boy from Missoula?” I said, “I went to the movies with him last night.” She said, “Yeah. I know. He called me up but I already had a date.”

00:35:00 Q: [Laughs] I love it.

00:35:04 Lewis: I was second choice [laughs].

00:35:06 Q: And it’s lasted all these years.

00:35:08 Lewis: And it’s—oh, yeah. Yeah. We’ve been married for forty-three, forty-four years.

00:35:10 Q: Wonderful. Yeah.

00:35:12 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. It's really funny, because I tell that story and I don't think he thinks it's as funny as I do.

00:35:19 Q: [Laughs] Men have a different way of looking at these things.

00:35:22 Lewis: Yeah. They do. They do. But, anyway, so.

00:35:25 Q: Oh, that's it. Yeah. Wilma's another sterling individual. She's done such amazing things. Yeah.

00:35:29 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. She has.

00:35:30 Q: And a great person. Yeah. Okay. That's quite a bit there. Do you remember, actually, arriving at Barnard, though? And, you know, you're coming—you hadn't been to New York before. Your parents had.

00:35:41 Lewis: Actually, I had been to New York with my parents—

00:35:43 Q: Oh, with your parents. Okay.

00:35:44 Lewis: —at age fourteen. I neglected to tell you that they went to France for the summer of '59, when I was ten years old and my brother was six. They went again in the summer of '64 right after—between our freshman and sophomore years in high school. And this

time, since I was fourteen and my brother was ten, we were old enough to go. So, we went with them. So, we traveled across the country in our car. [Laughs] We went down to Virginia to visit my dad's brothers, who were in the Navy at time. We came to New York. I actually had a great uncle who lived in New York City for fifty years. He was a professor of English at City College.

00:36:23 Q: Oh my. How good is that?

00:36:24 Lewis: CCNY. He taught Shakespeare. [Laughs] Another kid from Montana who ended up in New York. And so, we spent time with him and his partner. They were both gay, closeted males. You know, from the '30s, '40s, '50s. Never said a word. They were in the closet their whole life. They were together for over sixty years. So, that was kind of an eye opener for me too. You know?

00:36:48 Q: Sure. And you were aware of all that?

00:36:50 Lewis: I was kind of aware. You know, we talked about Uncle Arthur and his roommate Karl. But you could tell that—you know, my mom said she once asked Uncle Arthur, "Uncle Arthur, why did you never get married?" And he said, "Haven't found the right woman yet." [Laughs] But he had Karl. I mean, they were a wonderful couple. They were devoted to each other. They were smart. They were interesting. They were cosmopolitan. Oh my god, I just loved that. I mean, I just ate it up. That was so great.

00:37:22 Q: Great uncle, huh?

00:37:23 Lewis: So, that year, you know, we spent the summer in France. And we made friends over there and talked sign language all summer. And then, came back. So, I'd been exposed to the U.S., you know, through a lot of traveling before I came to New York.

There were two reasons I ended up at Barnard. My dad had done the graduate work at Teacher's College. He and my mom absolutely loved New York City. They loved Columbia. He loved going to school at Teacher's College. I mean, it was just—like, it was presented to me as heaven on earth. And then, Uncle Arthur, being an academic, an older person, who could give advice when my mom wrote to him, said, “Carolyn doesn't know where to apply to college. We just know she probably doesn't want to stay here and go to the University of Montana because you go away to college.” You don't stay at home and go to college. Not in my family. You go away to college. So, he said, “Well, you really enjoyed Columbia. Why not Barnard?” So, I thought, “Okay.” I got the catalogue from my high school counselor. I looked at it. I said, “Looks pretty good. I think I'll apply.”

The only other school I applied to was Carleton College in Minnesota. Small, liberal arts, originally church school. The reason I applied [laughs] to Carleton College was because when I was a freshman in high school playing in the orchestra, our first violinist was this beautiful, young woman who played—who was the daughter of another university professor. Her name was Ann Wright. And she went to Carleton College. She was Missoula's Junior Miss. She won the beauty and talent pageant. She was smart. She was, like, such a role model for me, even though I kind of admired her from afar. Well, if Ann Wright could go to Carleton College, that's

where I wanted to go [laughs]. So, I was admitted to both places, but New York City won out over Northfield, Minnesota.

00:39:27 Q: That's amazing.

00:39:28 Lewis: Yeah.

00:39:29 Q: That's great. So, who would you say was probably the most influential in those days before you got to Barnard?

00:39:35 Lewis: Absolutely, without thinking twice, my mother. I mean, she did, kind of, a traditional housewife-mother type role, but only to a certain extent. She always worked outside the home, whether it was teaching at a grade school, teaching at a high school, having piano students. She never just stayed home and raised the kids, because my family couldn't afford it. They needed the extra income. You know, even at the university level, music teachers have never been—you know, gotten big salaries. So, I know that my mom was criticized greatly for working outside the home when her kids were little.

00:40:21 Q: By contemporaries? By family?

00:40:22 Lewis: By contemporaries, neighbors.

00:40:23 Q: Oh, okay.

00:40:24 Lewis: I used to—especially when we were in Havre, which I have to tell you, she was desperate to get out of. I mean, it was this cold, dry, windy prairie town. They made—my folks made a few good friends, but she—I know my mom felt intellectually starved there. And when we had the chance to go back to Missoula, oh my god, you couldn't stop her.

You know, so, my mom was the one who always challenged me. Always told me, “I expect you to be the smartest kid in the room. So, just do it.” So, I thought, “Okay.” You know, “I expect you to get straight A's.” And it wasn't—I mean, she just set the expectation. So, I did it. She did make me practice my scales. I used to hate her for that. Sometimes. But she was also the sort of mother that, if I misbehaved and I was punished by being sent to my room without dinner, or being spanked, or anything like that, she would say [laughs], “I'm only doing this because I love you.” And I fell for it. I'm only—and I'd say, “Well, if you love me, you wouldn't spank me.” She'd say, “I want you to be a better person, so that other people like you.” Very important for a little girl during our time. “And if this helps you learn a lesson, then it's okay.” And then, she would give me a big hug, and she'd say, “But no matter what, I always love you.” I mean, I always felt totally secure in my parents' love, which again, some of my Barnard classmates did not.

00:42:00 Q: No. Yeah, definitely not.

00:42:01 Lewis: I mean, true confessions years later, and I thought, “You know, here are all these smart, pretty, young women who are kind of unhappy, too.”



00:42:10 Lewis: But I never—I was so lucky. I never had that.

00:42:12 Q: No. You were lucky. There were a lot who weren't [laughs].

00:42:16 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. A lot of my very close friends did not have a great—that sort of feeling of security that I had.

00:42:24 Q: So, I guess, within the university town, in particular, and not in the other one you mentioned, but, did you ever feel different than other families because you were so artsy and intellectual?

00:42:35 Lewis: I felt different, but it was in a good way. Yeah. You know, I kind of felt unique. One thing that my parents both said to me was that I was lucky to have the friends that I had. I had friends that, one of my friends, her father was a heart surgeon. Another friend, her father was a real estate agent. Another friend, her father was a disabled railroad worker. Another friend was the, the TV weather man. So, they all came from pretty solid lower to middle class families. So, in a way, we were, kind of, self-selecting that. The fact—my friends' parents didn't all have college educations.

In fact, in my family, both my mother and my father were the first ones to ever graduate from college. They both came from families of five children. My mother was the only one on her side of the family to graduate from college, of her siblings. My dad was the oldest of five, and the

only other one that graduated from college was his youngest brother. So, they were, kind of, pioneers in that way. I guess, I never really felt different enough to be unhappy, except maybe since my mother also taught English in the high school that I went to I never got a date, because, who wanted to date the English teacher's daughter? [Laughs].

00:44:14 Q: Oh, no. I was going to just ask that, about your first date in high school.

00:44:17 Lewis: [Laughs] I had a great social life, but I didn't have any sort of—I never got asked to the prom. I did go to one dance my junior year with one of the boys I knew who was at the other high school. So, that was, like, distance enough. He invited me, and then, I invited him to something. But that was the end of that.

00:44:35 Q: That's an interesting dynamic, though to have your mother teaching English in your high school.

00:44:39 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. We were very cool in retrospect about it, though. My freshman year, when I had her for English myself because I was in the A section, only two of the other kids at the class knew she was my mother. And they were two of my best friends who she'd known since they were ten. They kept their mouths shut. I mean, at the end of the—end of the year, some of the other students in the class said, "Mrs. Lewis is your mother?" I'd say, "Yeah." [Laughs] They'd say, "Well, that was an easy A." I said, "Oh, no. That was the hardest A I ever earned in my life."

00:45:14 Q: I bet.

00:45:15 Lewis: And my god. One quarter she gave me an A minus. Ugh. How could I live with myself? Well, I worked so hard in that class.

00:45:21 Q: Oh, no. And this was which year now?

00:45:23 Lewis: Freshman year in high school.

00:45:24 Q: Oh, no. Oh my goodness.

00:45:25 Lewis: Freshman year in high school [laughs].

00:45:26 Q: That's a tough one anyway. Yup. Yup.

00:45:28 Lewis: But anyway, yeah. I never felt, discriminated against or an outcast or anything like that. If I did in any way, it was probably something very trivial, very short lived, and obviously didn't scar me for life. I felt more out of place at Barnard.

00:45:49 Q: Go a little more into that. Coming from the west, from Missoula in particular, with all these kids from private schools in the east and all that it had to be a huge transition.

00:45:58 Lewis: Sev went to a private school. You know, her family seemed to have a lot more money than my family did. The—my schoolmates, like Phyllis Lefton, and Lynne Haims, and Judith Schnitman, who didn't go to private school, but had gone to these big power house public high schools where they excelled, but maybe weren't quite as happy, didn't have a lot of friends. So someone like Lynne came to Barnard and, all of a sudden, found her people. You're right. And she was so happy. I came to Barnard, and I felt, for a while, like a lot of my classmates just considered me a curiosity.

00:46:38 Q: [Laughs] Oh, dear.

00:46:39 Lewis: In fact, more than one of them said to me, "What were your SAT scores?"

00:46:45 Q: Oh, no.

00:46:46 Lewis: "I'll bet you got in because of geographical distribution." And I'd say, "What's that?"

00:46:52 Q: Exactly.

00:46:53 Lewis: They'd say, "You know, you have to have somebody from different parts of the country. So, they let them in." So then, I told them what my SAT scores were, and they'd say, "Oh. Oh. Okay." [Laughs] You know, obviously, I had earned my way in—

00:47:06 Q: Of course.

00:47:07 Lewis: —but I had to—I had to tell my—some of my classmates, I had to, kind of, just be honest with them, and say, “No. I’m here because I earned it.”

00:47:14 Q: Of course. Yeah.

00:47:15 Lewis: I just—no, I don’t own a horse, and my dad is not a miner, and I do bathe regularly. So, you know, it’s, like, give me a break.

00:47:23 Q: [Laughs] How long did that go on, until you had established your identity?

00:47:27 Lewis: [Laughs] Actually, it was Sev who said the thing about the horse and the miner in one of her letters to me before we ever met.

00:47:35 Q: Oh, before she met you. Yeah.

00:47:36 Lewis: She said, “Oh. I hear you’re from Montana. Do you have a horse? Is your father a miner? I hope you bathe regularly.”

00:47:43 Q: Is that typical of her sense of humor?

00:47:47 Lewis: It was her sense of humor, but I thought she was serious. Oh my god, I was so insulted. So, I said to my mom, “Mom, how do I respond to this letter?” She said, “Well, you just tell her that you’re bringing your own barrel of rainwater with you.” [Laughs] So, I did. But once I met Sev, I mean we just—all that aside. And I later asked her, I said, “You know that letter you wrote me?” She said, “I was joking. Couldn’t you tell?” I said, “No. I couldn’t tell. [Laughs] I thought you were serious. [Laughs] I was prepared to hate you.”

00:48:20 Q: You were very innocent [laughs].

00:48:21 Lewis: I was so gullible. Oh my god. I was so gullible. I really was. But it was her funny sense of humor. After that, we got along fine.

00:48:30 Q: Very East coast, too, I think.

00:48:32 Lewis: Yeah. I had to get used to that.

00:48:33 Q: What about, political or social things going on while you were growing up?

Anything particularly? Or do you feel you were, sort of, a bit cushioned?

00:48:42 Lewis: I think, the first time I was really aware of politics was in 1956 when [Dwight D.] Eisenhower was running for president. So, I would have been in first or second grade. And they kept talking about running for president, and I had in my mind, this vision of him racing down the road. [Laughs] And that was it. And there was somebody called [Adlai E.] Stevenson

[II] who was also running for president, and I had visions of them, like, [makes sounds of running].

00:49:11 Q: [Laughs] Very creative.

00:49:12 Lewis: I had no idea what an election meant or anything at that point, but by the time we got to the 1960 election with [Richard] Nixon and [John F.] Kennedy, oh my god, we were all involved in that. And out in Montana, as I recall, the big deal about John F. Kennedy was that he was Catholic. And it was very much a, sort of, a waspish environment. And oh my god. What will we do if we have a Catholic in the White House? The Pope will be running the country. People really thought that. And I remember—I don't remember my parents talking about it at home, but I remember having a mock election in my sixth grade classroom, and Nixon won handily because he wasn't Catholic, and for no other reason. The ironic thing is, my very best friend from age ten to today, Sharon Gillespie, was Catholic [laughs].

But she taught me something too. And I know she didn't get it from the nuns or from the catechism lessons—she didn't go to Catholic school. She went to public school. But she went to catechism lessons, and she'd come home, and we'd talk religion.

00:50:30 Q: Oh, did you?

00:50:31 Lewis: because I came from this very Protestant type of background. Liberal protestant background. She came from this, kind of, strict Polish, Irish Catholic background.

00:50:39 Q: What was the denomination?

00:50:40 Lewis: Hmmm?

00:50:41 Q: What protestant denomination were you?

00:50:42 Lewis: Well, when my parents broke away from the Assembly of God Church, which is a fundamentalist Christian church. The main reason they broke away was because of the arts. At the time, the church frowned on anything to do with music or art that was not done purely to praise god. So, the fact that my parents played secular music was frowned upon. The fact that I took ballet lessons—we never told the grandparents. They knew I studied piano and cello. They never knew I studied ballet, because dancing was evil.

As soon as my parents were able to break away from the fundamentalist religion, they kind of went the opposite [laughs] direction, and we because—we went—we ended up going to the University Congregational Church, which was perfect [laughs] for us. You know, welcomed anybody. Welcomed people of all persuasions. even though we—we'd get together Sunday morning and we'd sing hymns and we'd praise god—still, the fact that some of the church members thought that god might be an invention of man rather than the other way around, that was okay. I mean, it was all part of the intellectual spiritualism that was in that. That ended up being a perfect place for us.



00:52:07 Q: Right. Right. Good. Okay. Can you think of a day or a particular moment that really changed your life? That's a huge question, so. I mean, some people say, you know, "Coming to Barnard."

00:52:21 Lewis: Yeah?

00:52:22 Q: Other people have other things. Wilma, in fact, talked about being called up by, by Obama to receive, special citation.

00:52:32 Lewis: Well, that's wonderful. Good for her. That's amazing. [Clapping] Brava, Wilma.

00:52:38 Q: So, I mean, I just—there's a great range. There's a great range.

00:52:39 Lewis: I didn't know that. Because I haven't been in touch with Wilma in the last thirty years or so. I've seen her at a couple of reunions, and I love seeing her. That's great. I haven't had anything really specific like that that was really a thrill. I've had some pretty thrilling special moments in my life. Um—

00:52:59 Q: Well, don't put it on a scale. I mean, just whatever was special for you is significant.

00:53:03 Lewis: Yeah. Boy, I'd really have to think more about that, because a lot would depend on what period of my life we're talking about. You know, I can pick out something from my childhood, or I can pick out something from high school or college or beyond that.

00:53:16 Q: Well, be my guest. You can pick out, several.

00:53:19 Lewis: Oh, wow.

00:53:20 Q: [Laughs] I mean, these are things that, sort of, fuel us. So, it's good to go—think back on them. You've already mentioned the music. And, you know, being in various performances.

00:53:30 Lewis: One thing I did that was very uncharacteristic of Barnard and our classmates and everything is, I went through a rough time when I went off to grad school. It turned out that I really wasn't ready to continue the grind that we'd experienced in the four years at a Seven Sisters Ivy League school. I realized years later that I was one of those people who should have taken a year off, and then gone to grad school. But I got a four-year fellowship to get a Ph.D. in history at Indiana University. They really wanted me to come. It was, kind of, what all my classmates were doing. You know, they were going to law school. They were going to grad school. They were going to music school. I was the only one who really still didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. Everybody else had plans.

00:54:23 Q: We were only twenty-one [laughs].

00:54:24 Lewis: I know. And I guess, that's where I actually felt, kind of, at odds with a lot of my classmates. The whole time I was at Barnard, I went to my classes. I loved my professors. I crammed at the last minute for the exams. I'd stay up all night writing papers because I was a perfectionist and I couldn't get the first sentence down. But I never really knew what I wanted to do with my life or what I wanted to do beyond college. I knew I was going to grad school because it was kind of expected. I was in a prime position to go off to grad school. I got this great fellowship from Indiana University.

So, Tom, by then, had graduated from Columbia in '69, and he did something that was very untoward. He joined the army at the height of the Vietnam War, with all of us protesting the war. And when—he enlisted in the army. And the reason he did, and it just shows you how young we were back then, he knew that if he enlisted as soon as he graduated from college, he could defer actually going into the army until fall. And he'd get the summer off, and he could spend it in Montana and—you know, with his girlfriend [laughs] and this and that. So, he enlisted. His mother was so angry at him. But he was sure he was going to be drafted. So, he thought, "Well, if I enlist, maybe I'll get more choices on what I do and where I go." And so, he enlisted as a private. And all my friends were like, "He enlisted in the army?" You know, the—

00:56:13 Q: I can imagine there's a lot of pressure [laughs].

00:56:14 Lewis: Oh my god, I said, "Yeah. He did." But I thought, you know, "He'll figure it out. He's a smart boy. He'll figure it out." And sure enough, I can remember our senior year—

no, maybe it was our junior year. Yeah, he would have finished his advanced training after our junior year. Around Christmastime, he got his orders on where he was going, and I sat in the dorm room for six hours waiting for him to call me. And he called me, and he said half of his, troop was going to Vietnam and the other half was going to Germany.

00:56:51 Q: Germany.

00:56:52 Lewis: He said, “I’m going to Germany.” Oh my god. I burst into tears.

00:56:54 Q: Sure.

00:56:55 Lewis: I ran down to the hall. I got Lynne, and I said, “Ah, he’s going to Germany. He’s going to Germany.” She burst into tears. We were hugging each other. I was so grateful, because I had told him—I said, “If they’re sending you to Vietnam—” and I had already lost childhood friends and classmates to that war. I said, “If they’re sending you to Vietnam,” and I said, “and you want to go to Canada or Sweden, I will go there too.” I told him that. Well, my husband never would have dreamt of doing that. But I was ready. I was ready to go. I was never really an activist, politically in college, but I had very deep feelings. And I have to be careful, because this always makes me cry when I think about it—

00:57:41 Q: Well, it’s pretty emotional. Yes.

00:57:43 Lewis: —but when I think of the Vietnam War, and what it did to those little boys that I knew in the fifth grade, who I went to Sunday school with, who I went to high school with, who I was in high school musicals with, and they were killed as soon as they got over there—I'm still angry about it. But at the time, I was so confused about what was the right thing to do. You know, to protest the war was somehow doing something against Steve Slusher, who I went to Sunday school with. And he got killed during our junior year at Barnard. And to protest the war and all this was somehow against Don Lehuta, who was killed a week after I graduated from high school. He was just a year older than me, and he'd been in high school with me. I mean, it just broke my heart.

00:58:47 Q: Sure.

00:58:48 Lewis: And I would be at Barnard in my dorm room, and I'd get a letter from my friend Roxane, or another friend, and they'd say, "Steve Slusher was killed in Vietnam last week." Or, "Ron Tanner's funeral is next week." And my friend Roxane was married to a guy, also Tom's age, who was in Vietnam. And so, I knew boys—I knew boys who were over there. And I have to say that I kind of resented my classmates. My Barnard classmates, because they—to use a Montana expression, they got on their high horse about being anti-war and anti-this and anti-that. But they didn't know anybody who was there. You know.

00:59:42 Q: It's a huge difference.

00:59:43 Lewis: My cousin Bobby Joe—my cousin Bobby Joe George, three first names, from the ranch, my aunt and uncle’s ranch, my oldest cousin, six months younger than me. He was a helicopter door gunner in Vietnam. And the day after he switched to a new assignment, his replacement was blown out of the air and killed.

1:00:05 Q: But he made it.

1:00:06 Lewis: He had terrible memories of that war.

1:00:07 Q: For sure.

1:00:08 Lewis: He came—he was one of those good boys, who under the pressure of the uncertainty and some of the bad leadership they had, he did bad things. And he told me about that years later. He and I stayed—he came—he was a long-haul trucker, you know, when he got out of Vietnam. He had terrible nightmares for years. Terrible, terrible nightmares. And one night, he and I stayed up all night long and he told me some of the things that had happened to him in Vietnam. And if there was a defining moment in my life, it was living through that war with those kids. You know.

And the other thing—the other thing that my cousin Bob pointed out. He said, “You know, probably, if you look at the statistics, the boys from the south and from the west got killed in greater numbers because they grew up hunting. They knew how to handle firearms. When they got in the army, they were already sharp shooters. They got put right in the front lines.” And my

husband, he grew up hunting and fishing. You know, when he was twelve years old, he'd get his twelve gauge shotgun. He'd put it across the handlebars of his bicycle, and he'd go down to the river and he'd shoot ducks and bring them home. So, luckily, Tom went to Germany. But he still was, like, the best marksman in the whole company, because he could hit a target. And, so I guess, you know, I hate to, kind of, get off on the subject, but—

1:01:48 Q: No, this is important. This is very important. Yeah.

1:01:49 Lewis: —that is something that is still, kind of, an open wound to me.

1:01:53 Q: Absolutely. Do you remember—was there ever anyone at Barnard you could discuss that with, who had—you know, contemporaries who were also in the war—or were losing people?

1:02:02 Lewis: Who had friends there? Not—not really. I'm sure there were. But I didn't find them. I didn't know—

1:02:07 Q: So, you really were with this burden all by yourself.

1:02:08 Lewis: Yeah. I was—you know, I was getting the letters from my high school girlfriends who were telling me who was still alive and who was dead.

1:02:17 Q: Oh my god.

1:02:18 Lewis: Now, luckily for me, my good friends like Lynne and Judy and Sev, they were very empathetic. They—you know, they—Sev had cousins who could have gone to Vietnam and didn't. You know. They could relate a little bit. But I don't think, during the time we were in college, I knew anyone who actually knew someone who was there. They just talked about it. And to me, it was all talk for a long time. That's why, I'm sure at some point we'll talk about the strike.

1:02:52 Q: Yeah, we're getting up to that but—

1:02:53 Lewis: Yeah, so I had very interesting, to me, feelings about that too.

01:02:59 Q: But finish what happened to—your husband went through training. He was stationed in Germany?

1:03:00 Lewis: He went to basic—he went to basic training in Fort Lewis, Washington. He was assigned, to be an artillery surveyor. He did his advanced training in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. But this was December of 1969. By then, I think all the artillery surveying had been done in Vietnam, and they maybe didn't really need his skills there. So, he went to Germany, and he spent two more years—he was actually in the army for almost three years. He went to Germany, where he, got high security clearance and he was, at a base that handled nuclear weapons.



So, fortunately, Tom was,—he didn't get into the drug thing, he didn't get into the alcohol thing that a lot of the army guys were in then. He said there were terrible drug problems in Germany with the G.I.s. Drugs were easy to get. They were really potent. You had all these uneducated country boys who didn't know what they wanted to do with their lives. They came to Germany. They got drunk. They—some of them were heroin addicts. But again, Tom has always been kind of a dispassionate observer.

I did have one letter that he wrote to me [laughs] when he'd taken some LSD [lysergic acid diethylamide], and he was describing the droplets of water in the sink in his little flat in the little German town. And I kept that letter because it was kind of unique. But he was the type that might experiment once or twice but never really get involved. He was more interested in reading and learning. He studied German. He learned to speak basically what he called "gasthaus Deutsch." You could order two beers pretty easily no matter where you went. And he also found, kind of, soulmates within the army. In fact, we just spent the weekend with one of his old army buddies. We met him in Colorado, and we got together. And Bruce said—Bruce told us that one of the things that, kind of, attracted him to Tom was, one night Tom was working guard duty, and he was reading a book called Tudor Protestantism [laughs] or something.

1:05:24 Q: Wow.

1:05:25 Lewis: He was reading one of his heavy duty—Tom was a European History major at Columbia. And he had had to make the decision, did he go on to grad school or did he do the military service, because they were probably going to draft him anyway. The main reason he

joined the army was he was afraid he was going to get drafted. And he thought by volunteering, and having the deferred thing, and being smart, he could, kind of, help determine his own fate, which he was able to do. He was able to do. Thank heaven. But, no, it was *Tudor Puritanism*. That was the book he was reading. [Laughs] And Bruce said he—Bruce later went on to be, a community college counselor for his career. He said he couldn't believe he saw another G.I. reading a book called *Tudor Puritanism* [laughs]. So, they kind of struck up a conversation, and they ended up being really good friends.

01:06:17 Q: Well, that's good. Thank goodness he had some colleagues there. [Laughs] Yeah. Oh my gosh. That's amazing.

01:06:22 Lewis: Yeah.

01:06:23 Q: But okay. So, going back to Barnard. You—tell me a little bit about some of the classes you took, your major. You said you end up going to graduate school in history, so I mean—

01:06:34 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. I was an American Studies major. A lot of that was because of Annette [K.] Baxter, who was my advisor.

01:06:39 Q: Oh, I worked with her too. Yeah.

01:06:40 Lewis: I took a class from her, and I was just enthralled. And it was kind of like Ann Wright going to Carlton College all over again. I thought, “Wow. If Annette Baxter is like this, I want to be just like her.” [Laughs] I guess, in a way, I was always subconsciously looking for role models. And I thought, here’s this, kind of, beautiful, sophisticated woman with a classy doctor husband and these two beautiful children, and she’s just really wonderful. And she’s so smart. Oh my god. I always admired smart women.

01:07:14 Q: Of course. Yeah.

01:07:15 Lewis: I mean, just, oh. She’s so smart, and yet, she’s got this air of sophistication about her that I don’t have that I really want. So, I thought, “Well, maybe I’ll be an American Studies major [laughs] so I could have her for my advisor.” And I’d always loved literature. I’d always loved history. My mother was an English teacher. I read a lot as a kid. I just read everything I could get my hands on. And the idea of an interdisciplinary type of major where I could do the literature and the sociology and the history. That’s what attracted me to the American Studies major. In a way, it also meant I didn’t have to make a decision. I could sample it all. You know, I didn’t have to decide.

That’s why when I did get to grad school, I had to kind of decide, and it was history versus English. I got this wonderful fellowship at IU. I went off to grad school, but I really wasn’t ready for it. And within thirty days, I, knew I’d made a mistake. But I didn’t know what else to do, so I just kept at it for the full year.

Tom got out of the army. We got married in June of 1972. He was super excited to be back in school. He could hardly wait to go to grad school. So, he came to IU. He enrolled in those Ph.D. program in European history. He was happy, and I was miserable. Because I felt I was failing. I was failing big time, for the first time in my life.

01:08:58 Q: What does that mean?

01:08:59 Lewis: I'd had setbacks. You know, we all do. When you don't do well on a test, or you get the A minus instead of the A.

01:09:06 Q: You were a perfectionist [laughs].

01:09:08 Lewis: Yes, but here I was with this four year fellowship in my hands, and thirty days into grad school, I hated it. And I thought, "What am I going to do the next four years? How am I going to tough this out?" I didn't want to write books. I loved doing research, but I hated writing the papers. The thing I'd struggled with at Barnard, which was research something to death but never be able to put your thoughts down, it continued into grad school. I really didn't know what to do. When Tom was still in the army, and I was at IU the first year by myself, I made a few good friends, but they all had plans. They were like my Barnard classmates. They all knew what they wanted to do. They're going to get their Ph.D. They were going to do this. They were going to do that. And I was still, kind of, drifting. I had—I remember going to my advisor, George Juergens who was a Columbia grad, so he kind of took me under his wing. And I went into his office and burst into tears, and the poor man did not know what to do with me. "You want a

hanky?” [Laughs] And yet, I couldn’t explain. I wasn’t going to tell him that I was miserable, because I didn’t want to lose my fellowship. Oh my god, what would I do? You know.

So, I remember calling my mother, and she was the one that I was afraid of disappointing. Nobody else. Because I was going to get the Ph.D. she never got. You know. She worked—she worked hard. She double majored in everything. She got great grades. But she never got the Ph.D. she wanted. My dad never got the Ph.D. that he wanted. It was always unfinished business. I was going to be the one to do that. I would say that if my parents ever set expectations that I could not meet, that was where it was. And yet, at the time, they didn’t realize it, because I’d always risen to the occasion before then—

01:11:07 Q: Exactly. Yeah.

01:11:08 Lewis: —with no problem. And it was hard for me to admit to them that I was miserable in grad school. And what do I do? And you know, bless her heart, my mother didn’t say, “Oh, well, are you sure you can’t do it?” She said, “Honey, you can always come home.” [Laughs] She said, “Come home and think about it.” She said, “Just come home and think about it.” Well, I wasn’t going to do that [laughs]. You know. But it was nice knowing I had the option. I think that was the security that I always had. It was nice knowing I had the option, but, oh my god, I would have died before I’d really admitted defeat and gone home.

So, I toughed it out for the rest of the year. Tom got out of the army. We got married. We went back to IU. We started the fall session. He was happy. He’s reading his books. He’s going to his

seminars. He's writing his papers. And I am sitting at the typewriter with terminal writer's block. I cannot—so [laughs] one night when I couldn't write a paper, we had a bottle of sherry [laughs] in the fridge. I drank the whole thing.

01:12:16 Q: Oh no.

01:12:17 Lewis: [Laughs] I drank the whole thing. Tom got up in the middle of the night [laughs]. He finds me passed out on the bathroom floor with my head behind the toilet.

01:12:28 Q: [Laughs] Oh no.

01:12:29 Lewis: And he says—I still remember this—he says, “Sweetie. What's wrong? Your head is in the fuzzies.” [Laughs] I said, “I can't write that paper.” He said, “What paper?” “The one I've been trying to write for five days, and it's due in two days.” He'd say, “Well then, don't write it.” I said, “What?” [Laughs] He said, “Don't write it.” I said, “But it's due.” He'd say, “Don't write it. I know you can't write those papers.” He said, “You've been taking more notes and producing fewer essays than any person I've ever seen in my life.” He said, “Why don't you quit?” I said, “Huh?” He said, “Why don't you quit grad school?” I said, “I can quit?” He said, “Yeah, you can.” I said, “How do I do that?” He said, “Well, when you get sober [laughs] and you don't have a headache anymore,” he said, “I'll make a pot of coffee and we'll talk about how you can quit grad school.” So, the next day, we sat down and I said, “How am I going to do this? This fellowship?” He said, “It's not for you anyway? Why are you hanging on to this thing?” I

said, “Well, what else do I do?” He said, “You’ll find something.” He said, “Go get a job for a while. Go do something else.” He said—

01:13:47 Q: A good man. A good man.

01:13:48 Lewis: He’s a good man. He is. Well, I keep saying: any guy who would marry his high school English teacher’s [laughs] daughter has got to be a good man. And he did it. So, he said, “Yeah, you can quit.” So, he helped me write the letter to the chairman of the department expressing my regrets and how much I really enjoyed it, and how much I loved my professors, but it just wasn’t for me. And he walked with me over to the History Department and I turned it in. And, I have to say, I felt like this huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I didn’t realize how much I’d been struggling with that decision.

01:14:29 Q: Sure.

01:14:30 Lewis: And, then, my next—my next challenge is not what am I going to tell my parents, because they already knew it was coming down. What do I tell my friends? Oh my god. Judith’s off at Stanford getting a master’s degree. Lynne is at Johns Hopkins getting her Ph.D. Sev is at Yale, and then at Princeton. How do I tell them? And so, Tom said, “Don’t tell them anything.” He said, “Let’s just take a—you know, play it by ear for a few months. See how you do.”

So, I started looking in the Bloomington, Indiana local paper for jobs. Waitressing jobs, bartending jobs, this—the only thing I didn't want to do was babysit. I'd done enough of that in high school. So, I couldn't get hired even as a waitress. The town was full of people who needed jobs who were overqualified for them. There were no jobs to be had. So, here's where my life got interesting, and I we—I have never regretted this. I have a copy of my Mademoiselle magazine. I'm thumbing through it, and I see this little coupon, this little ad, and it says "Pan American World Airways: Fly and see the world, and get paid for it." So, I thought, airline stewardess. Oh my god, my Barnard friends will really think that's terrible [laughs], selling out to commercialism, selling out to—selling out the women's lib movement. Oh my god. I said, "Well, they'll never pick me anyway." So, I send it in. Two weeks later, I get a letter and they say, "Can you get to Cincinnati? We'd like to interview you."

Cincinnati is, like, a six hour drive away. I said to Tom, I said, "Hey, you want to go to Cincinnati for a day?" I said, "You can cut class." He said, "Oh, I'm not going to cut class." I said, "Well, really, the interview's on a Friday." He said, "Yeah, I'll drive you to Cincinnati." [Laughs] So, he grabbed one of my other grad school friends who wanted to go check out Germantown and go beer drinking. So, they went and drank German beer all afternoon while I interviewed with Pan Am. And I thought, "Okay. That's the end of that." We drove back. Two weeks later, I get another letter. "We want to interview you again. Can you come back to Cincinnati?"

So, this time, he stuck me on a bus out of Indianapolis. He drove me to Indianapolis, put me on a bus to Cincinnati. I went there, and I interviewed again. I mean, they did it all. They weighed me.



They measured my height. They were afraid I might be too short. But it turned out that it was only the U.S. domestic airlines that had minimum height requirements that I couldn't meet. I think, Delta and United and Eastern, you had to be five-four and I'm five-three. But Pan Am being an international world airline, hired a lot of people who would not meet the height requirements. Specifically, a lot of their Asian attendants were shorter than the Scandinavian ones were.

01:17:27 Q: Exactly. Sure.

01:17:28 Lewis: So, I think the minimum height requirement for Pan Am was something like five-two, so I was okay. I couldn't believe it. They hired me. Me, of all people. You know, this nerdy, brainy kid. [Laughs] They hired me. They said, "Come to Miami for eight weeks of training, and then, you can pick—whatever bases are open, we'll let you know. It could be Hong Kong, it could be Sydney, it could be L.A." So, I said to Tom, "Okay. I'm running away and joining the airline. Is that okay with you?" He says, "Sure." He says, "I'm going to go to Germany for the summer anyway and study history." So, I went to Miami for eight weeks of training, and, when it came time to pick a base, there were three that were open: New York, Washington D.C., and London. So, of course, I picked London.

01:18:19 Q: And tell me what that means. Is a base where you go every—?

01:18:24 Lewis: That is where you live, and you fly out of it.

01:18:27 Q: Okay, so you're living there. Okay. Okay.

01:18:28 Lewis: So, Tom was still going to be in Bloomington, Indiana. I was going to be in London. But he had gotten a Goethe Institute fellowship to go to Germany that summer and study both history and the language. So, he was going to be in Europe anyway.

01:18:40 Q: Sure.

01:18:41 Lewis: So, in June of 1973, I went to London. I met up with a couple of my classmates. We found a flat, and we started flying. And I have to say, I loved it. I loved it! I love to travel. It was great being paid to travel. I met all these interesting people, because Pan Am would not hire anyone who didn't have at least two years of college. Most of them were college graduates or, actually, had master's degrees. You had to have at least one language other than your native language, and for me it was my Barnard French. [Laughs] Thank heaven for Barnard French classes. And they—they had a very, kind of, sophisticated, classy, intelligent view of their flight attendants. They never referred to them as “stews” or “fly girls” or “honeys in hot pants.”

01:19:44 Q: Oh my gosh.

01:19:45 Lewis: We wore these beautiful uniforms that were, like, blazers and skirts down to our knees. Nothing above the knees. We had to have our hair off the back of our necks. So, if you had long hair, you weren't allowed to wear it loose or anything. It had to be pulled back. I had short hair. They had certain grooming standards, and they did have weight standards. And, but

they took this very professional view of their flight crews, which I really liked, given that I felt guilty that I was selling out the women's movement by becoming a flight attendant. I mean, the thing that was funny is when I—

01:20:23 Q: This was your own evaluation, though. No one else ever said that to you.

01:20:25 Lewis: Oh, of course. I thought, you know, all the women's—

01:20:26 Q: Everybody else was probably so jealous.

01:20:29 Lewis: I was a women's libber, you know. And you know, I didn't—again, I didn't demonstrate. I didn't walk around with placards, but I was very much women's liberation, equal pay for equal work, get rid of the stereotypes. And all of a sudden, I was, like, in one of the primo stereotypes that my classmates and I had been fighting against. So, I was afraid to tell my Barnard friends.

I get a letter from Lynne Haims saying, "I'm going to England for the year to work on my Ph.D." So, I call her up, I said, "Uh, Lynne. I'm going to be in London too." She said, "Oh, really? Vacation?" I said, "No. I have a job." She said, "You have a job in London?" I said, "Yeah." I said, "I'm an airline stewardess for Pan Am." She said, "Wow."

01:21:15 Q: Yeah. Yeah.

01:21:16 Lewis: I heard her—she said, “I’m speechless.” I said, “Are you embarrassed or something?” She said, “No. I’m jealous.” [Laughs]

01:21:24 Q: Exactly. Exactly.

01:21:25 Lewis: Bless her heart. I mean, Lynne, like—she totally restored my faith in myself that I was doing something that was okay.

01:21:34 Q: Absolutely, yeah.

01:21:35 Lewis: But for a long time, I felt like I’d sold out. Until I really got into it, realized that Pan Am was different from the other airlines. I mean, at the time, the U.S. airlines were doing terribly sexist things. They were putting their stewardesses in short shorts, and they had all these—this advertising that had sexual overtones. And I hated that. I hated that. I didn’t want to identify with that. Pan Am never did that. In fact, there was an organization of female flight attendants at Pan Am—they started it and some of the other airlines joined. It was called SFWR, Stewardesses for Women’s Rights. And I was a member of SFWR, and I saved their newsletters someplace in a shoebox. I probably still have those newsletters. And again, it turned out to be such a thrilling time. I met people who spoke six languages. I met people who could deliver babies in an airline bathroom. I met people who had saved lives. It was amazing.

I flew out of London. I flew three routes to the U.S. Just turn-around trips. I flew to JFK [John F. Kennedy International Airport]. I flew to Detroit and to Philadelphia. We’d have a day in each

city, and then, we'd go back. I also flew halfway around the world on a regular flight that went—we would fly from London to Frankfurt, and then, to Beirut, Lebanon. We'd spend the night in Beirut. Then we'd pick up—the next plane, we go from Beirut via either Tehran or Karachi to New Delhi. And then, the west coast crews would pick up that flight and continue it on, and we'd get—Pan Am had two around the world flights. They had Flight One that went east, I think, and Flight Two that went west. So, we flew the eastbound version of one, and then, we'd take the westbound of the other coming around. So, I spent time in Beirut. I spent time—not a lot of time in, Karachi or Tehran, because those were just stops along the way. I spent time in New Delhi.

You might remember that the Arab Oil Embargo started in about December of '73. We got stuck in Istanbul. I spent a day in Istanbul. I did all my Christmas shopping in Istanbul that year.

[Laughs] then, I got stuck in Beirut for two days. So, we went out to Baalbek and, you know, took tours around.

01:24:16 Q: Oh my. Yeah.

01:24:17 Lewis: And then, uh—

01:24:18 Q: Now, was Tom ever able to join you in any of these trips?

01:24:21 Lewis: No, he was in Germany that summer.

01:24:22 Q: Oh, okay.

01:24:23 Lewis: I had to bail him out with some money at one point, because, I guess the dollar took a huge plunge or something, then. And he basically ran out of money. So, I had to wire him money from London. But you know, it felt so good. It felt so good! I was bailing him out. It was, like, okay. I've got this paycheck.

01:24:43 Q: You're a career woman. Yes. Making money.

01:24:44 Lewis: I'm a career—I've got this paycheck, and I'm taking care of my poor destitute grad student husband. [Laughs] You know, it's my turn. And actually, that's the way we've approached our marriage ever since. We've taken turns taking care of each other. And then, about February of '74, I lost my job. Because of the Arab Oil Embargo, the fuel prices skyrocketed. All the airlines had to cut back. Pan Am was especially hard hit, because they had those long-haul international flights, and the fuel costs were just prohibitive. They cut way back. They laid off 1,200 flight attendants worldwide, and I was only senior to 200 at the time. Everything was done by seniority.

01:25:29 Q: Sure. Sure.

01:25:30 Lewis: So, I lost my job. I call up Tom from the Berkshire hotel in New York on a layover. I said, "I just lost my job. Oh, what do I do?" [Laughs] I always have this question. "What do I do now?"

He says, “Come home.” [Laughs] I said, “What? I can do that?” [Laughs] He says, “Yeah. Come home.” He said, “Come home, and you’re just being laid off, you’re not being fired. They’ll call you back at some point.” So, I said, “Oh, okay.” So, I went off to Bloomington and looked for a job. Couldn’t find one [laughs]. And then, finally, it became apparent they weren’t going to call me back any time soon. So, I thought, “How do I make myself of value here?” We have no money. We’re living off the G.I. bill. He’s a teaching assistant through the G.I. bill. We’re living on beans and rice and, you know, stuff like that. So, I thought, [snaps] “Okay. I’m going to be really good at cooking on a budget.” Well, I’m a terrible cook. I’m an unimaginative cook. The only thing I do well, is I can make a really good Thanksgiving turkey and I can bake Christmas cookies. That’s it. Oh, and Lynne taught me how to make bagels from scratch.

01:26:42 Q: Oh my. I couldn’t do that.

01:26:43 Lewis: That was her contribution to my ethnic cooking. Well, Tom decided he did not want to eat Cauliflower Ali Baba for dinner. It smelled terrible and tasted worse. He said, “You have got to do something else.” He said, “They’re doing the ATGSB, the Advanced Test for Graduate Schools of Business. They’re doing the test tomorrow. Here’s twenty bucks. Go take the test.” So, it’s just like me filling out the Pan Am coupon. I had taken the LSAT [Law School Admission Test] for law school. I got a terrible score.

01:27:20 Q: This was before you went to IU.

01:27:21 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. So, I went and I took the Graduate School of Business test, and I got a super high score. And he said, “Okay. That’s it. You’re going to business school.” I said, “Me? I’m an artiste.” [Laughs] You know. You know, I love literature and history. He says, “No.” He said, “You missed your calling. You should have been in business all along, probably.” So, I went into the MBA program at IU, and I eventually got my master’s degree in business.

01:27:47 Q: And you liked it?

01:27:48 Lewis: I liked it. And I met all these other refugees from the liberal arts who couldn’t get a job [laugh] with their liberal arts degrees. I met a trombone player. I met a dancer. I met a woman who was divorced and had two kids, and then was trying to find her way on her own. I met a woman who had been in hotel management. They all needed to do something different, and this was their way of transitioning into the real business world, as opposed to the academic world. And again, it was something I just, kind of, fell into. But it turned out to be a very good decision, and I’ve been in corporate life ever since.

01:28:30 Q: Amazing. That’s amazing.

01:28:31 Lewis: I have to tell you one thing, though. Tom decided that it was not at Columbia, but it was at Indiana University, that he finally learned how to think. How to think. He said, “I learned how to think at Indiana University.” Well, I frankly think it was because he was more mature [laughs]. You know, he wasn’t a college kid anymore. He’d done two and half years in the army. He was ready to learn to think. But he still attributed it to that institution. And so,



about ten years ago, we started working with the Indiana University Foundation to put together a scholarship fund, for the History Department. And they were so grateful because it—

01:29:15 Q: At IU?

01:29:16 Lewis: At IU. So, we have sponsored, for the last few years, a graduate—a small graduate fellowship at IU.

01:29:23 Q: Oh, that's wonderful.

01:29:24 Lewis: This year, we changed it to an undergrad stipend for an undergraduate history major who has gotten an internship, like, at a museum or an arts organization. And it helps pay their living expenses. But when I met the current History Department chairman, I said—he kept thanking us for doing this for the History Department. I said, “Well, I have to tell you what happened to me with the History Department.” I said, “I’ve always felt guilty that I blew this great fellowship I got here. I’ve always felt guilty that I didn’t finish.” I said, “This is, kind of, my way for making up for that.” I’m glad—I mean, the business school at IU doesn’t need my money. [Laughs] I mean, they’ve got people—you know, corporate honchos with lots of money who endow buildings. I said, “What are a couple thousand dollars a year from me going to mean?” But in the History Department, they really appreciate it.

01:30:22 Q: Of course. Yeah. Yeah. And you’re helping someone.

01:30:24 Lewis: So—yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So we feel good about that.

01:30:27 Q: Well, you should. You should. Well, let's go back just a little bit. I mean, you raised a lot of questions. I hopefully can get to them, but, so, let's go back to Barnard in the spring of '68. And, you've already shared some extremely powerful thoughts about the war and all that, but tell me about that strike and how you learned about it and what your involvement was, or—

01:30:49 Lewis: I was actually on the other side of most of my classmates. And it was because, at the time, I was clueless. We were freshmen in college. I was not politically aware. I knew I was against the Vietnam War, but this whole thing about the gym in Morningside Park, and the involvement of the community, I didn't understand any of that. I actually empathized with the causes that my classmates were espousing. I was very much supportive of that. But I was not someone to go out and demonstrate. It just wasn't something that was in me. I would observe from afar. I would write letters to my parents. I'd cut out articles from the *Columbia Spectator* and the *Barnard Bulletin*, and I'd send them home to try to explain what was going on. Because, of course, my parents had questions. You know. They had questions because their friends had questions and they—their friends were saying things like, "Well, Carolyn's there, isn't she? Where all these troubles are? Are you going to let her go back in the fall?" You know, my parents had to field that sort of thing. And they said, "Well, of course. If she wants to go back, she'll go back." You know, never any question in their mind.

But I was kind of confused. Where did I fit into that? And I felt like I didn't fit in. What I didn't like was the fact that the university was being shut down and I saw—I honestly had a somewhat

cynical view of some of my classmates. I thought some of them were using it as an opportunity not to go to class, not to write their papers, not to take their exams, and they were, kind of, hoping to slide out to the summer and not have to finish stuff. I know that a lot of them were not like that. They were very committed to the cause. I mean, heart and brain and body and soul. They were committed to, The University had to do the right thing, not the wrong thing, that we had to get out of the war. We had to do the right thing by the community. But I also saw some people that I thought were taking advantage of the situation. And when that happens, I get somewhat cynical, and I don't want to be involved. So, I just took a hands-off view.

When—you remember the Majority Coalition, the students who lined up around Low Library? I stood in that line while my classmates were in the building or throwing things to the people to the building. And I stood in that line because I wanted things to go back to normal. I wanted to go to my classes. I wanted to finish my papers, take my exams, so I could go home and get my summer job as a clerk typist with the forest service. No! That was later. I was going to work at the music school at the University of Montana. I was going to spell the secretary who needed some time off. I was going to be the secretary in the music—I just wanted to be done with my freshman year and gone, and then, come back. And all this—all the riots, they called it, and all the trouble and everything, I saw it as, kind of, something very exciting. But I thought, “What are these kids doing?” [Laughs] You know? How do their parents feel? I was getting calls from home, letters from home, saying, “What's going on? What's going on?” I don't know what my classmates' parents felt. But the other thing is, is that—

01:34:21 Q: But you had a supportive group who were in agreement with you.

01:34:23 Lewis: I did.

01:34:24 Q: And that's helpful.

01:34:25 Lewis: Yeah. My close friends. They were all, kind of—that I never felt like I was alone in it. My friends were actually more active than I was. They—you know, they'd sign petitions. They'd go to Times Square and get people to sign positions. I'd just, like, try to write that paper that I couldn't get the first sentence out of and, you know—in a way, it was a big adventure, because even though I didn't participate, I was always on the fringes. I was always watching. I was on campus watching what was happening.

I was in my dorm room the night of the bust, when the mounted police came in. And I did—that was a big awakening for me. I did see students running down 116th street with mounted policemen after them with billy clubs, swinging at them. I did see students with their heads bleeding. That woke me up. I thought, “Oh my god. This is not just fun and games. This is serious stuff. Whatever is going on, this is serious stuff.” And after that night, I kind of—again, I didn't feel like running out and defending them. But I—it was like a big wakeup call to me, to be aware, to be more receptive to these ideas that were going on around—to try to not be as judgmental as I had been, not as quick to judge. And ever since then, and I think that had a lot to do with my thinking, I have been, kind of, your classic bleeding heart liberal. [Laughs] But within limits. [Laughs] You know. I still set limits that have to do with structure and what people should do and what they shouldn't do. But still, I try to see all sides of a problem. My instinct is

to be quick to judge, but I've learned to tell myself to sleep on it, think about it, bite your tongue, don't say anything, and see how you feel in the morning before you issue your thoughts.

So, yeah. The strike in '68, it was a big deal at the time. But to me, looking back at it forty some years later, other than, kind of, opening my mind to other ways of thinking, I didn't see it as a big point in my life that defined the rest of my life at all. It was just an interesting thing that happened. And I got to the point where I tried to explain things in a more reasoned and, kind of, educated way. I would buy books and send them home to my parents that I thought might explain what had happened, and that sort of thing.

I go back to our Barnard reunions now, and sometimes I think our classmates are caught in a time warp because all they talk about is the '68 strike. And sometimes I want to shake them and say, "Grow up!" [Laughs] "There was life beyond spring of '68. Really." But a lot of them are still very much preoccupied with it. And I find that a little puzzling, because I kind of wonder what happened in their lives afterwards that wasn't as important or as defining or something. So.

01:37:56 Q: Good point. Yeah. Yeah. I think there were a lot of people who just were totally confused, and recognized they were kids. A lot of people don't remember what happened, really.

01:38:03 Lewis: Really?

01:38:04 Q: Yeah, they know what—no. They don't remember the specifics. That's been my experience from interviewing people. So.

01:38:09 Lewis: Wow. Yeah. because I—

01:38:10 Q: It's, like, "Yeah, I was confused. And I was resentful that I missed my classes." Or, "Yeah, I was against the war, and I thought it was going to stop if I stood out there with everybody else."

01:38:18 Lewis: Yes. Yeah.

01:38:19 Q: I mean, it was naiveté. I mean, we were—

01:38:20 Lewis: Well, I think—

01:38:21 Q: But yeah, I know there are some who are still obsessed, though. Definitely. Yeah.

01:38:24 Lewis: Yeah. They're totally obsessed about it. It's like they can't get beyond it. One of the one of the reasons why I did react the way I did was because of a couple of my college professors at Barnard.

01:38:37 Q: Oh, okay.

01:38:38 Lewis: I was taking a religion course. I was taking a New Testament course. And I don't remember the professors, but they were a husband and wife team. They were Hungarian. And they had lived through the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

01:38:54 Q: Oh my. That's quite an insight.

01:38:56 Lewis: So, when all our classes were voting in a democratic way as to whether we should finish our papers or take an exam, or we should just all take incompletes and go home, that husband and wife team stood their ground, and they said, "Look. We were in Budapest," I don't know. "We were so and so. We were students during the Hungarian Revolution, and there was never any question but that you would finish your classes, write your papers, take your exams and then, if you had spare time to revolt, go for it." So, I thought, "Yeah. I like that."

01:39:35 Q: Yeah. Yeah.

01:39:36 Lewis: And so, I saw—you know, and that was a mixed Columbia and Barnard class. Some of the boys reacted, like, "Oh, how could you say that?" And then, the girls, kind of, followed along. I said, "Well, of course they can say that. You know, they've been through this, and much more serious, where people were getting killed." I mean, we were getting hit over the head, but nobody got killed during the Columbia strike that I recall. So, I—that's when my, kind of, cynicism bounced in, and I said, "Yeah, let's finish up. I want to go home. The weather's nicer there." [Laughs] I mean, it sounds trivial, but I was ready.

01:40:15 Q: No. Of course. Of course.

01:40:16 Lewis: And our freshman year was a big deal, and I'd learned a lot. I'd made all these good friends, and I wanted to, just finish it up, and then, go on. And never any question as to whether I would come back in the fall. I could not even understand why my friends—why my parents' friends would ask them that. But my parents, they always stuck by me. They said, "Of course she's going back. If she wants to, she'll go back. If she doesn't want to, we'll figure something else out." But I wanted to go back.

01:40:48 Q: Yeah. It was an odd time for sure. You haven't mentioned much—you said you came from a very white bread, kind of, environment growing up in Montana. Now, do you have any experience at all with civil rights, or with, African Americans or any others when you came here?

01:41:05 Lewis: We actually did have—

01:41:06 Q: Or at Barnard too, but either place. Yeah.

01:41:08 Lewis: Yeah. In, in Montana, the persecuted minority were the Indians.

01:41:14 Q: Oh yeah.



01:41:15 Lewis: The Native Americans. They were on reservations. So, you never saw them.

When I was in the third grade in Havre, Montana, I had a classmate named Jeannie Buffalo. She had—oh my god—pierced ears. She was very exotic. She was very lonely. She didn't do well in school. I remember feeling really sorry for her. But I was a kid. I was eight years old. I didn't know how to reach out and be a friend. You know, I stuck with my other little, middle class, white bread friends like most eight year olds would do. But I still remember her. I remember her name. I remember how she looked. I remember how sad she seemed to be all the time. And I don't know what happened to her. You know, I hope she had a decent life, but I doubt that she did.

When I was in high school, and I hung out with my music friends, my good friends that I was in the string quartet with, there was another Native American girl that would, kind of, hang out nearby. She'd sit at the lunch table in the cafeteria with us, because we didn't push her away. And we'd be at the lunch table, and she'd sit at the end. And she'd, kind of, listen and smile, and we'd acknowledge her, but we never included her. You know, to this day, I feel guilty that I didn't know enough to reach out.

Now, my family—my grandparents, my mom's parents—my grandmother and my grandfather both met in Miles City, Montana when they worked for the Milwaukee Railroad. My mother's father was a railroad machinist and her mother was the secretary at the railroad office yards, and that's how they met. In their later years, after they retired from the Milwaukee Road, they both went to work at the Montana State Industrial School for Boys, which is the reform school. Miles City, Montana—it's called the Pine Hill School now, but it was the reform school for juvenile

delinquents. My grandmother was the secretary for the general manager for this institution. It was a residential program. My grandfather taught boys to weld so they could get jobs. They had a lot of experience with what happened on the reservations because most of the kids there were Native American boys who'd been caught stealing cars. And then, they're institutionalized. Some of them learned enough to get decent jobs when they got out. Some of them graduated to higher levels of crime and ended up in Deer Lodge, the Montana state penitentiary. Some of them went home to the reservation and drank themselves to death. Some of them got killed.

So I used to hear stories about the Indian boys at the school. My grandparents befriended them, helped them. My grandmother had to censor the mail that came in to them. She had to read all their letters. And, of course, she learned a lot about what was going on on the reservation through that. But she also was one of those people who could, kind of, see a spark if a kid had it. And she'd encourage them, and she'd help them with their writing. And my grandpa, the same way. He'd see a kid who might have a talent for the industrial arts. He'd prevail upon his railroad friends to give the kid an apprenticeship or something. So, in a way, I think, my grandparents ended up doing a lot of good, and they didn't even realize it.

Yeah. It's very challenging work. So, you have some of that in you too [laughs].

Lewis: Yeah, maybe so. But—so, when I was growing up, those were the persecuted minority. And there was no thought of civil rights for them. No way. You know? Okay, so then, there's the civil rights movement. African American people in the south. Okay, I'd read about it in *Time Magazine*. I'd watch it on TV. I thought, "Whoa." We had a couple of black families in

Missoula. They were both associated with the university. One of them was an athletic trainer for the athletic teams. The other was a minister. And they both had kids my age in high school. Those kids—I'm sure they—if you talk to them, they would say they suffered because of the color of their skin and their race. But they were also very smart, very personable kids, and they had lots of friends. So, of course, Sid Rinehart was a big basketball star. Patty Nolan was the president of the Girls Club. You know, they were all very well accomplished. I thought, "Okay. All colored people are like that." And I couldn't imagine why somebody like Sid or Patty would be rioting because they couldn't vote. Well, they can vote in Missoula. What's wrong with that? So, that's another place where I had to be educated.

And I mentioned that during the summer of '64, we drove across the country and we went to France. So, I was fourteen years old. I'd been reading about the civil rights movement. We studied it in school. I mean, our teachers made sure we knew what was going on in current events. We got down to Virginia to visit my two uncles and their families, who are in the Navy, and we stopped at a—we stopped at a, gas station. And the water fountain had a sign on it that said "Whites only." And that's when it hit me. I said, "Mommy. Mommy. Come look. It says, 'Whites Only.'" I said, "Well, what do the other people do?" "Well, they can't drink out of the fountain." That's when I—I realized it was real. It wasn't just something in *Time Magazine*. And I—again, an eye opening moment. Eye opening moment.

But I didn't really run into a lot of different people of other ethnic groups, or certainly racial groups, until I came to New York. But that's one reason I loved it so much. I finally got to meet all these people that I'd only been reading about [laughs], and they were classmates. It was

just—it was just wonderful. I loved it. And I have to say that that’s one reason, though, that even though—Montana has made great strides since then, especially in the more liberal, western part of the state. You do see all ethnic groups and all religions and everything there. I mean, they’ve made a stand, and it’s not unusual anymore. I had my first bagel when I came to the Barnard dorms. I’d never seen a bagel before. I said to Lynne, I said, “What’s that funny looking doughnut?” And Lynne says, “Doughnut? That’s a bagel. You don’t know what a bagel is? Oh, you—” you know, kind of, like, “You clueless Montana kid.” [Laughs] Yeah, so. Yeah, now you can get bagels in Montana. Really good ones too.

But, yeah. So, that was—I have to hand it to Barnard for providing me a safe place to be exposed to the world and to New York City. I mean, talk about having the best of two worlds. You’re in New York City, but you are in a—kind of, a contained, safe environment. You’re not out there on the streets by yourself. I could go home to Montana at Christmas and the summers, get away from the big city. But then, I was always eager to come back. Always eager. And I did have friends and acquaintances at Barnard who were African American, who were Asian. My close friends were mostly Jewish. I mean, except for Sev, she was, kind of, a Polish agnostic type, she told me. But all my other friends were Jewish. That was new to me. Not so much the concept of being Jewish, but keeping kosher.

See, all the Jewish friends we had in Missoula were—they didn’t keep kosher. They were—they were just, like—I just thought they went to a different church, and that was it. But they weren’t really observant. Now, many of them that are still there are there. There’s even a synagogue in Missoula. Maybe back then, they were afraid to be observant. They were quiet about it. but I was

thrilled to find out what this really meant. I said to Lynne, I said, “How can you live on tuna fish for four years?” She said, “It can be done.” [Laughs] Because she kept kosher in the dorms, Lynne did. I also learned that a lot of my Jewish classmates came in various flavors. Some ate bacon and eggs. Others didn’t [laughs].

01:50:14 Q: Not everyone kept kosher.

01:50:15 Lewis: Some kept the dietary rules and ate tuna fish every day. Others moved out of the dorm so that they could keep their own kosher kitchens. And I thought, that’s really great, that Barnard made—

01:50:28 Q: Yeah, I hadn’t realized that Barnard didn’t make any accommodations for Jewish kids. I don’t know.

01:50:30 Lewis: Not, at least, for the first couple years. I mean, you have to hand—you have to also hand it to the activism of our class. I think our class started saying, “You need to be aware of this, and do that.”

You know, in a way, I kind of rode my classmates’ coattails. Because I was afraid—not afraid, but I wasn’t really interested enough to be an activist, but I sure took advantage of the work they did. I have to say, I’m grateful to them for that. I’m grateful to the women’s movement, to the women who were willing to stick their neck out and protest and bring things to people’s attention. Because even though I maybe didn’t have the personality to do it myself, I could at

least live the life, and they made it possible for me. And that's another thing. I look around me now, and I see a younger generation that takes a lot of stuff for granted. Thank heaven they can. We couldn't back then. We really couldn't.

01:51:37 Q: No. No. We were the pioneers [laughs].

01:51:38 Lewis: We were. I would say that more than the Columbia strike, the women's movement that our class was so active in made a true difference in my life. Absolutely unequivocally—

01:51:50 Q: And I think the women professors—we had amazing women.

01:51:52 Lewis: Oh, the role models.

01:51:53 Q: The role models. Yeah.

01:51:55 Lewis: The Annette Baxters. The Chris Royers.

01:51:56 Q: Yes. Yeah.

01:51:57 Lewis: Oh, I love Christine Royer. Oh.

01:51:58 Q: She's always been amazing. Yeah.

01:52:00 Lewis: Yeah. All the women professors. I'd never seen—other than in high school who had, of course, a lot of female teachers and male but—

01:52:07 Q: And your own mother. Yeah [laughs].

01:52:08 Lewis: Yeah. My own mother. Right. To see all these college professors that were women with Ph.Ds. and law degrees and medical degrees. it just was amazing to me. Just amazing.

01:52:22 Q: So, when you—when you actually—I mean, how—you've told me about a couple of things you did, and you haven't really gotten unto what your career was after your MBA. And we'll get to that in just a second. But what did you think you were going to do when you entered Barnard and then when you left Barnard?

01:52:40 Lewis: When I entered Barnard, I—

01:52:42 Q: In terms of a career, what did you see yourself doing?

01:52:44 Lewis: Well, my role models were teachers. I always thought I would teach one way or another. I liked the idea of teaching in college because my dad did it, and I admired a lot of people that did it. I knew that with a Barnard degree, I could probably have a life like that. So, once I decided that I was going to be an American history major, that's why—applied for

fellowship programs to get a Ph.D. in history. I thought I was going to teach in college. What I didn't realize is that you also had to publish or perish.

01:53:22 Q: Yup. [Laughs] It killed a lot of us.

01:53:23 Lewis: Right. And I had no desire to write books. I really didn't. Unlike maybe you or other people who wanted to write, I really didn't. I loved doing the research. I hated writing the papers.

01:53:37 Q: But you must have done quite well.

01:53:39 Lewis: I was a good writer.

01:53:40 Q: Somehow you got through those papers.

01:53:43 Lewis: I struggled with it. I struggled with it. Mostly because I was the type of person who had to have to whole essay written in my mind, and then, I had to write it out word for word. Rough drafts, I could not handle. Note cards, you know, scattered around the floor to put my thoughts together. I just didn't think that way. What's really ironic is that probably the most liberating thing in my life, professionally, intellectually, in every way, has been the ability to use a computer and do word processing. Because now I have no problem. If I have to write something, I have no problem, putting down a few bullets, and then, fleshing them out and moving them around. And maybe getting rid of them all together and starting over. That was the



process my brain was going through when I was writing those papers, but we had no way to physically do it. I did have classmates who would jot down thoughts on pieces of paper. I thought, “How bizarre is that?” You know. Now, I realize they were word processing long before it was invented.

01:54:50 Q: That’s actually true. Yeah.

01:54:53 Lewis: They had it figured out and I didn’t.

01:54:54 Q: Well. That’s what you did.

01:54:55 Lewis: So, now I think, “Oh, wouldn’t it be great to be in college again?” I’d get all those papers written. I wouldn’t struggle with it. Because I would start making notes, and then I would, like, move them around and tweak it and this and that. I don’t know. I’m a very good editor of other people’s work [laughs]. In fact, that’s a lot of what I do here in this temporary job is I do some editing.

01:55:19 Q: Let’s—yeah—so, let’s go back, and tell me then about your professional career in cover—

01:55:25 Lewis: Well, again, I’m—I think I’m still trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up.

01:55:32 Q: [Laughs] A lot of energy there.

01:55:34 Lewis: Yup. I'm still trying to—I still, at times, would like to be a trapeze lady in the circus.

01:55:39 Q: I love it. [Laughs] You've got the right physique, Carolyn.

01:55:43 Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah. Yeah. But not the right family background. I think that's something you really have to be raised in. [Laughs] It's not something that I'd say, "Okay. Do this next." Although, you can take trapeze school here in New York City. Maybe thirty years ago, I would have tried it. Not now. I do other stuff. But, um—

01:56:01 Q: So, you were in Indiana. You're in Bloomington.

01:56:04 Lewis: In Indiana, thinking I was—when I initially got there—thinking that I would complete a PhD and then I'd get a job teaching in college someplace. Tom would get out of the army. We'd get married. He'd get a job teaching at the same college, European history. And we'd live happily ever after in some nice little academic town teaching all these wonderful, brilliant, appreciative students. And then, I realized that I hated to write papers. And then, I realized even if I did, I probably wouldn't get a job anyway because there were no jobs for us back then. I mean, all my friends that went to grad school intending to teach, who actually taught: Sev did. Phyllis Lefton did. The others all ended up doing something else. Because there were no jobs.

01:56:54 Q: I mean, Phyllis was in math, which helped, and Sev was in—

01:56:56 Lewis: Music.

01:56:57 Q: Music. Yeah.

01:56:58 Lewis: Yeah. Music theory. Composition.

01:56:59 Q: She was music theory.

01:57:00 Lewis: Not just performing. Performers are a dime a dozen, but theoreticians, I think, are pretty—

01:57:06 Q: It was a very tough time academically. I'm sure it's worse now.

01:57:09 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah.

01:57:10 Q: Okay. So, you've done the—you've done the amazing stint as a [laughs] stewardess, as a flight attendant. You've traveled the world now. And you've gone back, you've gotten the MBA. All right, and then, where do—

01:57:21 Lewis: Okay, so then I got the MBA, and I thought, “Okay, what sort of work am I going to do with this MBA?” Well, the prestigious job back then for MBAs was banking. I thought, “Okay, I’ll be a banker. “So, I, got a job. I got a job interview with Citibank in New York City. I was the only one in my MBA class that got a job interview on site with Citibank. I came here, I had two different interviews, one with, the lending department, which is typically where a young banker starts out, is a loan officer. The other was in the operations department down on Wall Street, which, these days, would probably be called information systems or something. It was more technical sort of stuff. And then, I interviewed with several other banks, a bank in Ohio. I interviewed in Chicago with Northern Trust. I went down to North Carolina and I interviewed with Wachovia bank. Citibank offered me a job. All my classmates were jealous. So, I said to Tom, “I got a job offer from Citibank. I’m the only one in the whole class.” And he says, “Well, if you want to go to New York, go ahead. I’m staying here.” [Laughs] I said, “What?” He says, “I’m a history major. I can’t get a job in New York.” He said, “You can get a job in New York, but I’m never going to get a job in New York. I can’t go there. I won’t be able to get a job.” So, I turned them down.

I also had been interviewing with a couple of retailers just because it looked interesting and they had room on their slots. Macy’s had a division in Missouri, Kansas. They had about twelve stores in Missouri and Kansas, based out of Kansas City. I interviewed with them. They offered me a job. So, I said, “Well, I hate clothes. I’m not into fashion, but maybe there’s something I can do at Macy’s that could be interesting.” So that’s the job I took. Tom and I moved to Kansas City. He’d done all but dissertation with his European history degree. He’d passed his orals. He’d passed—just—his written exams. He hadn’t written his—he didn’t write his dissertation.

He was ready to quit anyway. He'd had enough. So, we went off to Kansas City, and I was within the retail management part of Macy's. And, he got a job as a shipping clerk at a little audio-visual company. And then, he took business courses part time—

02:00:00 Q: Ah. Contagious [laughs].

02:00:01 Lewis: —at University—University of Missouri at Kansas City, UMKC. Well, I loved the first job I had, which was assistant buyer. I had a very tough boss. A really, really mean woman who made my life miserable. She was, kind of, schizophrenic. She'd have fights with her boyfriend. She'd come in and take it out on me. She'd scream at her suppliers. I'd have to go hide in the defective merchandise stock room and write up reports just to get away from her. She scared me to death, but I have to tell you, I learned a lot from her. Just by observing, saying, "I'm not going to do it that way. I'll do it this way." I learned—she was—she was a brilliant merchandiser. She had incredible retail instincts. She could look at a trend and buy 100 more and make a bunch of money. She was the star buyer for that division of Macy's. And that's actually why they matched me up with her, is because I came in with an MBA, not just a bachelor's degree, and they probably thought I was going to be a star too.

Well, that woman just scared the shit out of me. I—you know, she really did. And I had many, many second thoughts about it, because she was personally quite abusive. It's not the sort of thing you would be able to get away with now. I remember going and talking to her boss, and saying, "How do people work with her?" He said, "If you can tough it out, you will learn a lot from her." He said, "Just tough it out." He said, "You won't regret it. Just tough it out." So, I did.

And I think she realized one day that I wasn't going away, that I wasn't going to spend all my time in tears in the defective stock room, that I was going to stick in there—

02:02:08 Q: You put that so tactfully [laughs].

02:02:09 Lewis: Well, that's what it was like. I mean, that was my escape. I'd say, "I think I'll go write up the defective sweaters so we can send them back to the vendor." She'd say, "Okay!" [Laughs] You know, it's a [makes wincing noise]—but one day, she realized I was there to stay, and I was—I know what happened. I told her off.

02:02:29 Q: Oh my. You were brave.

02:02:30 Lewis: I did. I'd had it up to here. She was yelling at me, and I said, "Patty!" I said, "I'm tired of this." And she goes, "What?" I said, "I'm a grown up woman. I don't need you to treat me like a misbehaving little kid." I said, "The reason I did this wrong is because you never give me any guidance. You're always flying off to Italy or New York or L.A. on buying trips, and you just leave this crap for me to figure out. And I have no idea what I'm doing." I said, "If you will tell me how to do this job," I said, "I will not only stick with it, but I'll be the best assistant you ever had." And within two months, we'd totally turned the situation around.

02:03:14 Q: Amazing.

02:03:15 Lewis: And when I left that job, she said, “You’re the best assistant I ever had.” Who knew?

So, that was my first year at Macy’s. My second year, I was out in one of the stores, managing a department. I didn’t like that because I had to manage people, and I’ve never liked to manage people. I had to manage sales clerks. And so, that’s where I ran into the reality of the working world, with people who will lie to you, who will call in sick when they’re not sick. It was hard. My husband is a good boss. He does that very well. I don’t like it. I want people to behave. [Laughs] I want them to do the right thing. I don’t want them to try to pull a fast one on me. But because I’m pretty gullible, they do it, and they get away with it. And that’s one of the struggles I’ve had all my life in business, is as long as I could have a job where I didn’t have to manage people, where I could just be the worker bee, do the work, or assist somebody who is doing really complicated things, I do very well at it. Put me in a supervisory role, I don’t do well at it. Because I’m too eager to believe everything I’m told. I want to believe the best of people. I can’t believe that they would take advantage of my good nature. And they do. And then, I’m always really disillusioned. Like, “Oh, this shouldn’t be happening.”

So, the second job with Macy’s, I had to manage people. For the most part, it was a pretty good experience. But I also realized at that point that I had no fashion sense. I had no merchandising sense. My T stands and my displays and my mannequins never reflected the trends that the store was pushing. I was always being criticized for that. But I’ll tell you, I had a clean defective stock room. [Laughs] I was always going through the merchandise and pulling out the stuff with holes in it, and writing up and sending it back to the buyer so they could get credit on their budgets,

you know? So, I was a hero in that department. But when it came to actually selling the stuff, oh my god. No way. “Carolyn, that’s last week’s sweater.” “Oh yeah. It’s kind of pretty isn’t it?” “Well, that’s not’s what’s selling. Get it off that mannequin.” [Laughs]

02:05:38 Q: Oh my.

02:05:39 Lewis: Retailing is a tough world. It’s a very tough world.

02:05:41 Q: Oh yeah.

02:05:42 Lewis: And anyone who does it, and especially who does it and enjoys it, they have my admiration. It’s a tough business. And you never got any time off. You’re working every holiday, you’re working every sale, you’re working every weekend, and you’re working long hours. But again, two years of a very tough job that I was not suited for. I learned a lot about myself. If nothing else, I think a bad job can teach you a lot about yourself. So—

02:06:14 Q: So, you learned what you could and couldn’t do?

02:06:16 Lewis: I learned what I—

02:06:17 Q: Management being one of them.



02:06:18 Lewis: —and what I was good at. So, the next step in my career, where I finally started having a career, was, Tom and I had been in Kansas City for two years. We loved it. It was a great town. Great restaurants. Pretty parks. But really hot and humid. Miserable weather. Kind of like New York and New Jersey [laughs] in the summer. We had friends out in Denver that we would go visit whenever we had time off, and we'd go hiking in the mountains. And my dear friend, Sharon Gillespie, from childhood, was living in Boulder. And one day, Sharon said to me—she said, “You know, Carolyn, if you and Tom ever decide to come to Denver and look for jobs,” she said, “I'm going to take a month off my job this summer and go hang with my mom and my family. And it would be really nice if someone could come stay in my condo and water my plants and take in the mail.” So, I said, “Oh, wow. A whole month?” She said, “Yeah, I'll be gone all during August.” So, Tom and I are in the car heading back to Kansas City, and Tom said, “Gee, it would be nice to live in Denver.” And I said, “Eureka! I've found it.” I said, “Guess what Sharon told me?” You know, blah blah blah blah blah. He said, “Okay, let's do it.” So, I said, “Well, how will I tell Macy's I'm leaving?” He said, “You can do it.” [Laughs] “We have been through this before. You can quit! You really can quit.”

So, I walked in. And I went to my store manager, and I said, “I'm movin' to Denver.” “We don't have any stores in Denver.” I said, “Well, I guess I won't work in a store anymore.” And he says, “Well, I want you to talk to the head of, personnel, you know, the human resources guy.” So, he was out visiting anyway. So, I thought, man—and I said, “I'm moving to Denver and I'm leaving Macy's.” He said, “How can you?” I said, “Well,” I said, “the next step for me is to be a buyer. And I've been interviewing for jobs, but no one wants me because I have no fashion sense. So, I guess, there really isn't much of a future for me in this field.” I said, “I hate to admit it, because,”

again, “I’ve made lots of friends. I’ve learned a lot.” Blah blah blah. I said, “But it’s just not for me.” I said, “My husband and I are going to move to Denver, and I’m going to figure out something else to do.”

Moved to Denver. I stayed in my friend’s house, in her condo. I watered her plants. I gassed up her car. I went to all sorts of interviews with banks and companies, and I was over—our friends that had, kind of, urged us to move there. We were over at their house one night and, they had other friends over. And I was talking about hunting for a job, not knowing what to do. And one woman said, “Well, you know, the phone company’s hiring.” I said, “The phone company. What, to be an operator?” You know, I was thinking, Oh my. Airline stewardess again. I’m going to be a telephone operator. [Laughs] She said, “No.” She said, “No. they’re actually trying to hire people with backgrounds in different industries so that they can start marketing their services to businesses, because there are changes coming about in telecommunication where there’s going to be competition.” She was a corporate lawyer someplace. So, she kind of had her ear to the ground. And she said, “The phone companies aren’t going to be just a utility anymore. They’re not going to be the only game in town. They’re going to have to learn to sell their services, because the federal government is opening it to competition through deregulation of telecommunications.” So, I went and interviewed, and here I had this great retail background. They needed someone to go out to the retail stores. So, that’s the job I got. And I ended up spending —

02:10:07 Q: And this was in Denver now? Yeah.

02:10:09 Lewis: This was in Denver. I ended up spending twenty years with AT&T.

02:10:11 Q: Oh my. Okay.

02:10:12 Lewis: That was my career. Ten years in Denver in sales. Sales and marketing. Then, I came to New Jersey on a promotion after ten years, to work in the international division. Specifically, helping put together programs for sales people out in the western region. So, that's how I got to New Jersey. And I had a great career with AT&T. I never became chairman. I never got beyond middle management. But again, I learned so much, and it was a very interesting time to be in the regulated industries, because they were all being torn apart.

02:10:55 Q: Bell was gone. Yeah.

02:10:56 Lewis: They were all—and, you know, we talk about generation gaps these days in the workplace. You saw it then, because you saw the old Bell heads, they called them, the Lifers, who could not adjust, did not want to adjust. And then, you saw them bringing in—not so much young people, but people with different backgrounds.

One of my co-workers in this group of about eight people that were brought in, in a training class, had recently retired as an Air Force pilot. He spent twenty years with the Air Force, and you know, when military people retire, they're still in their forties. They're too young to quit working. So, Al Drago was his name. Al started with the phone company for a second career. And talk about an interesting guy. Do you remember when President Kennedy stood up to the

Russians over Cuba? That whole thing, and how we all—we were in the seventh grade. We all thought we were going to die in the next nuclear war. And we're hiding under our desks. Al Drago was one of the navy pilots that was flying those missions that had discovered those missiles, those missile sites.

02:12:16 Q: Amazing. Oh my god.

02:12:17 Lewis: I mean, I felt like I was in the middle of history.

02:12:21 Q: I was going to say, exactly. You've got an eye witness right there. Not just an eye witness, a participant.

02:12:26 Lewis: Yeah. He was one of those pilots flying those missions where they were doing some of the photographs and stuff. Of course they had the satellite images, but what proved it, as I recall, was the fact that we had people doing sorties over Cuba, proving that the Russians were building up those missile bases with nuclear weapons. And I thought, "Whoa." You know. And here—this guy, he was the most mild mannered, you know, soft spoken guy. He wasn't this big macho, military guy. He was just, like, a really smart guy who flew planes. I loved him. Oh my god. I hung out with him. I learned so much from him.

And then, one of my other work mates had just quit teaching high school. She was sick of putting up with the discipline problems, [laughs] she said, of the kids. That was Monica. And I met another one who—recently divorced, had to raise her kids, had to get a good job. I have to say

that one of the things I've truly loved about the different jobs that I've had has been learning from the other people. Just hearing their stories, you know, comparing notes, figuring things out together.

Um, the whole world of sales was new to me. I, kind of, had to put my ego on hold and realize I was going to get a lot of rejection. That was hard at first. But once I learned to do it, I learned—I learned a couple of things. I learned that people buy from people that they like, and from people that they think they can trust. So, if you are selling something to a customer, your job is to be trustworthy. You have to have integrity. I would have made a good used car salesman, I guess [laughs]. Integrity, trust, and likeability, in that you establish the relationship so that you can—not be friends, not be buddies, but feel comfortable in talking about the more difficult stuff. And it's not something that's innate in people. A lot of it has to be learned.

02:14:45 Q: So, you felt you had good mentors in the company?

02:14:49 Lewis: Good mentors.

02:14:50 Q: Yeah, who led you forward with this? Yeah.

02:14:51 Lewis: Yeah. And I really enjoyed my years with AT&T. I worked very hard, probably too hard.

02:14:57 Q: I'm sure [laughs].

02:14:58 Lewis: It took me many years to figure out how to work smart not just work hard.

02:15:03 Q: You mean, long hours and—

02:15:04 Lewis: Long hours, doing stuff that really wasn't important, but thinking I had to get it all done. That's part—the perfectionist streak is advantageous only to a point. After that, it drags you down. But it took me twenty, thirty years to figure that out.

02:15:21 Q: Oh dear.

02:15:22 Lewis: I know. In so many ways, I would love to live parts of my life over again, and do it differently. I'm sure we all feel that way.

Oh. By the way, speaking of Pan Am, two and a half years after they—

02:15:35 Q: Yes, whatever happened? Yes.

02:15:36 Lewis: —two and a half years after they furloughed me they called me back. It was the summer of '76. I'd just accepted the job with Macy's. I was on my way to Kansas City. I got a letter from Pan Am saying, "We've gotten to your name on the seniority list. It took us two and a half years, but come back to London. We have a spot for you." And you know what I did? I said, "I'm coming." I wrote them a letter, and I sent it. I said, "I'm on my way." Two days later, I had

second thoughts. I thought, they're calling me back in June. They're going to lay me off in September. They just need me for the summer tourist season. I'll be out of a job again. You know. But you know what I shoulda done? I should've instead written a letter to Macy's saying, "I'd like to come start the job in a year instead of in two months. Can I defer starting the job?" I've often thought, what might have happened had I done that instead? I like to, kind of, fantasize about it, and see what might have happened.

But I didn't. I never went back to the airlines. I always kind of dreamt it would have been fun. I still dream that I'm going back to Pan Am. I'll dream that I'm on a plane to London, and I don't have my uniform. And what am I going to do, because I don't have my uniform, but I'm expected to show up for work. Well, I know what happened to the uniform. For some foolish reason, when I was in Bloomington as a grad student, I gave it to the Salvation Army. [Laughs] I should have kept that damn thing. It'd be a collector's item now.

02:17:23 Q: Oh, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah.

02:17:24 Lewis: Yeah. So. Yeah, so, I spent my, kind of formative career years, twenty years with AT&T. And it was a good job, good pay, good benefits, nice people. The world of telecom at the time was in turmoil. It was never a dull moment. A lot of stress, because people were constantly not knowing what was going to happen to their job. How their job would change. This or that. In a way, I was lucky because Tom and I never planned to have kids, so we didn't have to worry about putting kids through college, family to support. We could, kind of, just do what

we wanted. But the other thing that my work at AT&T enabled us to do is, it kind of restored my faith in myself, because now I was the bread winner.

02:18:19 Q: Oh, okay.

02:18:20 Lewis: It was my turn to be the bread winner. And I was the bread winner for about ten years. Because Tom also never did the academic career that he'd planned. He, kind of, dabbled around. Didn't know what he wanted to do. He fell into small business. He went to work as a salesman for an office equipment dealer in Denver. He sold calculators. He sold copier—not copiers. He sold calculators and adding machines. And when computers started coming out for business use, he really got into that. And,—but he never made much money. So, I was the paycheck and I was the benefits. And I felt good about that, because it was my turn to do it. You know. And I enjoyed that. You know, we were able to buy a house. We always had two cars. We did some nice trips. It was really a good, kind of, middle class, low key life.

But we always had lots of adventures. We have never thought anything about just dropping everything and going off some place.

02:19:30 Q: And can you share a little bit—

02:19:31 Lewis: Where do you want to live next?



02:19:32 Q: Share a little bit about that. [Laughs] What were some of the adventures? I mean, I know you're traveled a lot. You can speak about—?

02:19:37 Lewis: Well. We've traveled a lot. When we were in Colorado, we really got heavily into skiing. So, we loved to travel to different ski areas. We were always going back to Montana, because Tom's two brothers were there, my parents, his parents. We went to Montana a lot. They came to visit us. We went to visit them. But, we were also the type that, when we were poor starving graduate students in Indiana, living on rice and beans, we never had enough money to stay in a hotel or anything, but we could get in a car and we could drive and stay with somebody.

So, we'd go back east. We'd stay with his Aunt in Virginia, or we'd stay with friends in Tennessee, or we'd go to Texas and visit people there. We thought nothing of just hopping in the car and driving for twelve, eighteen hours to get someplace and then visiting. And we still do that. We still love—we love to go on road trips together. We love to hop on a plane and spend a weekend in a different city. We'll do stuff like that at the drop of a hat.

02:20:39 Q: What are some of your favorite places? Or places you've—particularly are memorable?

02:20:43 Lewis: I loved San Francisco. I went to San Francisco a lot when I worked for AT&T, and I was supporting the western region. San Francisco, Portland, Salt Lake, Phoenix, L.A., Seattle, and as a lot of people do fall in love with San Francisco, I fell in love with San Francisco. Great place to get up in the morning and go for a run before you start your business

appointments for the day. You know, that sort of thing. I also, even though I spent my childhood mostly studying music, I also did have those two years of ballet. And that is actually my first love.

02:21:25 Q: Oh my.

02:21:26 Lewis: I started taking ballet classes again when I was in my mid-forties. So, for twenty years now, I've been studying ballet as an adult student.

02:21:36 Q: Oh, how wonderful.

02:21:37 Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah. I'm much better now than I was at age ten.

02:21:41 Q: Oh that's wonderful.

02:21:42 Lewis: [Laughs] Unlike a lot of middle aged ballet students who remember how much better they used to be, I was never very good because I didn't have a chance to study that much as a kid. So, everything I do now is an accomplishment. It can be hard on your body. You can injure yourself. But everything I do is new and different. It's exciting to me. So, the other thing I started doing—

02:22:04 Q: So, are you performing?

02:22:05 Lewis: No. Well, I did perform a little bit in a local studio's production of "The Nutcracker." I was the rat queen, and I wore a tutu and a big rat head.

02:22:17 Q: Oh, yeah. I remember that part. Yeah.

02:22:19 Lewis: Yeah. I wore a rat head. Scared the little kids. I love that. But what I did was, when I was traveling a lot on business, I would get off the yellow pages, as soon as I got to my hotel room, if I was in Seattle or San Francisco or Los Angeles. I'd look up all the ballet studios. I'd call them up and see if they had an open adult ballet class that I could come to.

02:22:44 Q: Oh my.

02:22:45 Lewis: And I'd go and take class. One week I spent in San Francisco, is with some other AT&T human resources people I worked with. We were at a conference. Every night, they went out to dinner and drinking. They'd go out and drink and have hangovers the next day. [Laughs] I'd go to ballet class. I tried five different studios in San Francisco [laughs]. That to me was such a treat.

02:23:10 Q: That's amazing.

02:23:11 Lewis: So, I packed my leotards and my ballet slippers and my towel. And, you know, I'd take two changes so I could wash them in between, and I went to five different studios in San Francisco, and I took adult open ballet classes. It was wonderful. I was in heaven [laughs].

02:23:27 Q: And you're still doing that?

02:23:28 Lewis: So—Yeah. Yeah. Since then, my husband and I both have also gotten into Pilates and yoga, because we're looking for things we can do as we get older that will help maintain—

02:23:42 Q: Even though you don't look old at all [laughs].

02:23:43 Lewis: Sometimes I feel old after an especially tough yoga class, but, yeah. We're looking for things that not only will help us maintain our fitness level and our balance and our flexibility, but it's something we can do together. Because now, when we go on trips, my husband will find the local Pilates studio.

02:24:07 Q: Oh, okay.

02:24:08 Lewis: And he'll say, "My wife and I are in town. Do you have any open classes we can come to?" And we'll go, and we'll take a Pilates class.

02:24:20 Q: Fantastic.

02:24:21 Lewis: Or we'll go to a yoga studio and take a yoga class. And it's great fun for us, because then, we can talk about it afterwards. You know, what we learned. And it's always good

to have a new teacher, a new coach. A new—the way I put it—and it works for Pilates, yoga, ballet, any, sort of, type of coaching situation. It's good to have a new pair of eyes looking at you. Because they don't see what the old pairs of eyes are used to seeing. They see new things that you can improve upon and learn from. So, we really enjoy that. I mean, we spent Thanksgiving in Atlanta with friends couple years ago. First thing Tom does is find a Pilates studio for us to go to. [Laughs] I say, "Oh, you're crazy. You're just a madman." He said, "No. I really enjoy it. And use it or lose it." You get away from it too long, it's like starting over.

02:24:10 Q: Oh, sure. That's very strenuous.

02:24:11 Lewis: Yeah.

02:24:12 Q: Oh my goodness.

02:24:13 Lewis: So, we're always up for new adventure. About eight years ago, I also, decided I was going to learn to figure skate [laughs].

02:24:24 Q: Oh, that kind of goes together, huh.

02:24:25 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah. The ballet training really helped me.

02:25:26 Q: Had you done it as a child?

02:25:27 Lewis: No.

02:25:28 Q: Oh, okay.

02:25:29 Lewis: No, I had skates as a child, but I never took a lesson. You know, I never know what I was doing. So, I found there was a sports arena in Bridgewater, New Jersey. We were still living out there at the time. And they had a “learn to skate” program for adults.

02:25:44 Q: Okay. You start at the beginning.

02:25:45 Lewis: So, I put—I started at the beginning. I was a wall clinger, hanging on to the wall, afraid to move out onto the ice. First thing I learned was to march on skates. Then, I learned to push off and glide. And I stuck with it for about—oh, about three years. I took classes for three years and made quite a bit of progress. I never really learned to jump, because, uh—

02:26:11 Q: How old were you when you started this?

02:26:12 Lewis: Fifty-six [laughs].

02:26:13 Q: That’s great.

02:26:14 Lewis: No. I was fifty-eight. Fourteen, fifteen—fifty-six. I was fifty-six my first year.

02:26:22 Q: You stuck with it for several years, yeah?

02:26:23 Lewis: Yeah.

02:26:24 Q: Good.

02:26:25 Lewis: I'd always loved figure skating because of my ballet background. I just ate it up on TV, and I thought, "Oh, I have to learn this." We would just—

02:26:31 Q: You probably love the Olympics when they—

02:26:32 Lewis: Oh my god. I just—I overdose on the Olympics, and—but you know, it's really hard. Ice skating looks easy, and it's not. And you know what else? When you fall, the ice is hard and it's cold. And if I were younger, I probably would not be as cautious. It's not that I'm afraid to fall, because I've fallen many times, but I don't want to be injured so I can't do my other stuff.

So, you know, I fell on my wrist once, and it wasn't broken but it was pretty sore for a while.

And—but, I don't get to ice skate much anymore because of my schedule and where we live and everything. But that's one thing I would pick up again if I had the chance. I would do that.

02:27:21 Q: And what is it about ice skating? Oh, well, you said the background in ballet, but is it—? There must be some aspect of it that really appeals to you.

02:27:29 Lewis: It's the grace, the flow, the music, of course. You know, the feeling of moving to the music, which is what I also love about ballet and dancing. I really enjoyed learning to skate because my ballet training made a big difference in how—in my alignment, in my line. Everybody always thought I was better than I was, because I looked good.

02:27:57 Q: Yes. Yeah.

02:27:58 Lewis: I just couldn't do all the stuff, but I looked good because I knew how to hold my body and use it and use my arms and, you know—and how to make a pleasing, sort of, image. But, I—it's challenging. I've found that ice skating was as much a brain, intellectual challenge as it was a physical one. And that's where I also realized—something that I thought about a lot, in my ballet studies is, that's where I truly realized that adults learn differently than do children. When you're a kid, it's all about imitating. Do this, do that, do that. Adults need to be told how to do it, why they have to do it that way, what'll happen if they don't to it that way. Adults, you have to appeal to their brains. You can't just say, "Do this."

02:28:52 Q: Imitation's not enough. Yeah. Yeah.

02:28:55 Lewis: Yeah. Imitation is great when you're three or four, or even six or seven. But as an adult, you need to know, "How can I imitate that? I'm not sure I can. And how do I go about it?"



02:29:07 Q: Right. Right.

02:29:08 Lewis: And that's why, I think, you find people, coaches and teachers, who do well with kids and some who do well with adults. And you can't especially count on one being good with the other. My mom, who taught piano all her life, she loved her students. Many of her students started with her when they were five, and they stayed with her until they graduated from high school and went away to college. But when she and my dad finally, truly retired, she said, "No more kids. They grow up. They go away. I'm only going to have adult students." So, for about ten years, she had only adult students who would come and take piano. Some of them had studied as kids, and it had gotten away from them. Some had wanted to study as kids, and their families couldn't afford it. Some had never studied, always wanted to learn, and now they had the time to do it and the money. And the thing my mom said—has said, that I've also taken into both the skating and the ballet is that, these students are there because they want to be, and they're paying their own money. They are not there because their mother made them come [laughs].

02:30:24 Q: Yeah, right. Which is a huge difference, of course.

02:30:25 Lewis: Yeah. Yeah.

02:30:26 Q: Okay, so how—tell us a little bit about how you ended up in this particular job now. Well, we are at Google [laughs].

02:30:33 Lewis: Yeah, we're at Google. I'm a—I call myself a Toogler, a temporary Googler. A Toogler.

02:30:39 Q: You told me a little bit before we had the video going. So, maybe you could repeat a bit of that again.

02:30:42 Lewis: Oh. Okay. Okay. Yeah, I totally fell into this job somewhat by chance and somewhat by design. And let me explain this to you if I can. I spent my whole career doing corporate stuff and—not administrative stuff, because I was always in my own, kind of, worker bee job. But when I left AT&T, I took one of those early buy outs. I was, you know, twenty years. I'd had enough, ready to do something different. I was going to learn to tap dance. That didn't work. Okay, so.

02:30:20 Q: [Laughs] We're getting closer to the aerial artist.

02:30:21 Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah. I know. You know, this has to do with me still trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up. You know, so, yeah. The tap dancing and I didn't get—ballet, I get. Tap dancing, I don't. So I decided I was just going to do—when I left AT&T, I wanted just to take as much dance as I could. So, I took a ballet class every day. I took a beginner tap class once a week. Turned out it wasn't enough. I took a modern class. I took a jazz class. I was having the time of my life. But here I was—oh, and I was buying opera tickets and Broadway show tickets and ballet tickets, and one day my husband says to me, “You're really spending a lot of money these days, and you're not bringing any in anymore.” I said, “Oh yeah.

You're right. I have a lot of time to get these tickets and plan our—you know, our schedule." He says, "Well, guess what?" He said, "I don't want to have to work 'til I die." He said, "If you're going to keep spending all this money, you have to get a job and help me pay the bills." [Laughs] So, I said, "Oh, I don't think I can get a job like I had before."

And I tried. I tried. But, you know, ageism has already set in. They don't need someone with my experience. I'd be too expensive. So, I started doing temp work. And it was mostly administrative assistant type work. I worked for PSE&G [Public Service Enterprise Group], the gas company, in a meter reading office where I wrote up dog bite reports. [Laughs] I worked at Chubb Insurance in the—I guess it was in the, in their compensation department. I filled in for a woman who was out on six months of maternity leave. I worked for Keyspan Engineering for another woman who was out on six months of maternity leave. You know, keep those babies coming [laughs].

It meant there was employment for me, and the great thing about being a temp was, I didn't have to commit to any one job. They certainly didn't have to commit to me. And I could try all these different industries. So, I could work for an engineering firm. I could work for the gas company. I could work for, a pharmaceutical company. I worked in—for a company called Enzon Pharmaceuticals, and I was in the regulatory department, and they're the ones who file with the FDA for drug approval. And they were specifically for cancer drugs. Oncology. So, that was very interesting.

I actually ended up getting a permanent job offer from Enzon. And so, I got off the temp rolls, and I went to work full time for them. But after a couple of years, the company was bought by another company. And they completely reorganized, and my whole department lost their jobs. So, we were out again. So, I went back to my temp agency, and I got a temp job at Verizon Wireless, being an administrative assistant, for the department that actually does the billing. So, if you have Verizon Wireless as your carrier, the bill is what my department produced. And I was the admin to the woman who ran that. And I stayed with them for about two and a half years. So, at least twice, these temporary jobs turned into permanent jobs, and I would take the permanent job.

My last six months at Verizon Wireless, though, my life started changing because my parents started getting old and needing my help. I never thought my parents would get old. You know, I thought they were invincible. I thought they'd live forever. I thought they'd be young and vigorous forever. It didn't happen. [Laughs] You know, they—and here's the other thing. My parents were young when I was born. My mom was twenty-two and my dad was twenty-one. So, I'm almost more their generation than I am their kid's. A lot of my Barnard classmates had parents who were older than my parents.

02:35:35 Q: That is quite young. Yeah.

02:35:36 Lewis: Yeah. They were young when they had me. So, I could not only see them getting old, but I could also see me advancing. And seeing what was happening to them, I did not want to happen to me. So, that's why I kind of got more into the physical stuff.

02:35:52 Q: Is it bad health, or—?

02:35:53 Lewis: Um, just—um, interesting lives, but inactive physically.

02:35:58 Q: Yeah. Yeah.

02:35:59 Lewis: You know, they were from the generation that you only train to do athletic things if you were an athlete. They didn't do it for lifestyle or health or weight control. They didn't. So, you know, they started reaping the non-benefits of an inactive lifestyle that was, kind of, forced on them actually. When I was in college, when I was at Barnard, my parents, even though they didn't exercise, they were very active outdoors. They hiked. They fished. My dad was a hunter. He'd go out and get a deer every year and we'd eat it. They—we always had a boat. We'd go water skiing. They loved to backpack. They'd go on three day backpacking trips and pack everything on their backs and set up tent and camp. They were doing this when they were in their late forties.

Then, when my dad was only forty-nine years old, he had a major stroke, which basically disabled him for the rest of his life. Paralyzed his right arm, partially his leg. It affected his speech, so he had speech aphasia. He could think of the word, but he couldn't get it out. It was a major blow, not so much to him, but to my mother. It was really hard on my mom to see this happen to her husband. He was only forty-nine years old. He did recover to the point where he was able to go back to his university teaching job.

02:37:41 Q: Oh, okay.

02:37:40 Lewis: my mother was afraid that they'd be destitute because my dad couldn't work anymore, and she'd already quit high school teaching. She was so worried. It was a really tough time in her life, and by extension, our lives. Because I spent a lot of time just trying to convince her that her life was not over. You know, this strong, positive woman who had been my primary role model, was just all of a sudden falling apart on me. And all my dad cared about was getting better and staying alive. So, he was doing his own thing. My mom was just totally off the wall. She alienated a lot of their friends because she was so—all she could talk about was how George couldn't do anything anymore, how their lives were ruined, how they couldn't do this, they couldn't do that. A lot of their friends bailed on them. When I looked at them ten years later, and they'd, kind of, gotten through it, and my mom had resigned herself to the fact the my dad was disabled and maybe they couldn't do a lot of stuff, but there was still a lot left to life, they had a whole new circle of friends. Thank god my mom and dad have always made friends easily. Because they could have really been in a bad position.

And I was pretty miserable a lot of that time, myself, because I didn't know what to do. You know, I didn't know what to do. And, my mom would call me up and she'd say, "We have no friends here. We're going to move to Denver to be with you." And I'd say to Tom, "Oh my god. What am I going to do?" He'd say, "Tell her no." [Laughs] He always has an answer, and it's always very practical.

02:39:31 Q: Yeah?

02:39:32 Lewis: So, I'd say, "No. You can't." And she'd say, "Why don't you love me?" I say, "Of course, mom, I love you. I said—"

02:39:37 Q: It's just like when she spanked you.

02:39:38 Lewis: Yes.

02:39:39 Q: I'm doing this because I do love you.

02:39:41 Lewis: I'm only doing this—yes. I'm only doing this because I love you, mom. And she said, "But—"

02:39:45 Q: And I want to be able to keep loving you [laughs].

02:39:46 Lewis: I said, "You still got the symphony chorale. Dad's still singing in the Mendelssohn Club chorus. Okay, he can't do his solo faculty recitals anymore because he can't depend on his voice, but he can sing in a group. He can make music with his friends." I said, "You still play the piano. You're still in great demand as the world's best accompanist." I said, "So, do your Mendelssohn Club stuff."

So, they kind of got through it. I mean, they went off to Europe with the Mendelssohn Club. They toured all over singing. They did a summer in a U.S. Forest Service cabin where they took care of a campground. I mean, dad did what he could and mom did most of the hard labor. They traveled. Once she, kind of, got her brain around it, they ended up having a very good life. A lot more happy years together. And my dad only died four years ago. My mom is—my mom is still living and enjoying life.

02:40:43 Q: It had to be a huge blow for her, then. Yeah.

02:40:44 Lewis: She's—yeah, she—it was, I think, the two toughest years of my life were 2010 and 2011. My mom had a major emotional and nervous breakdown. The first thing that happened, and it—

02:40:58 Q: After he died?

02:41:00 Lewis: No. It was before. She was worried about—she was so worried about, if she died before him, what would happen to him, that she had a breakdown. Now, you know, how do you explain that? But she was worried. She was worried about what was going to happen to them as they—? She had to stop driving, because her eyesight was failing. She was very depressed about her eyesight getting worse. And so, it was a tough time. We got through it. but one of the happy things that has happened in the last couple of years, is that each year I help my mom do her holiday letter to her friends. She has always been very good about corresponding with friends and staying in touch with people. I never did that. I mean, talk to Lynne Haims. She'll tell you



that she used to call me collect, because she knew I never spent money on stamps. [Laughs] You know, I'd say—

02:41:58 Q: You were too busy—

02:41:59 Lewis: “Oh, I'll accept the charges.” She'd say, “Well, Carolyn, you never write to me. You never spend any money on stamps. I figure you can accept this collect call.” I'd say, “Go for it.” [Laughs] Ah, Lynne. She's so funny. She's so great.

02:42:11 Q: She is. Yeah.

02:42:12 Lewis: Anyway, so, about three years ago, it was the year after my dad died, I said to mom—I said, “Let's do a Christmas letter to all your friends.” “Oh, nobody wants to hear from me.” I said, “Of course they do. You saw the outpouring of love that happened when dad died, how everybody contributed to your scholarship fund that you'd set up.” I said, “Now, you've got all their addresses, because you have all the sympathy cards. Let's write to all those people. Let's send—do your little form letter. I'll get some photos. We'll put it on. We'll send it out.” Well, she actually sent her Christmas letter to a couple of those friends that she had not spoken to in thirty years. But they had written sympathy cards when dad died. And now, she has renewed those friendships. People that she thought she would never talk to again because they abandoned her. I said, “Mom, they didn't abandon you. They got out because you were so mean.” Tough love here. You know, what can I say? And they responded. And now she's in touch with friends that I couldn't believe she'd been out of touch with them that long.

I used to beg my mom to kiss and make up, but she had—she could carry a grudge. And, I guess, that's one way I didn't want to be like her, is I could see how she could ruin friendships by carrying a grudge, or a perceived grudge, or a perceived slight.

02:43:46 Q: Is this Irish? German? What the background there? [Laughs]

02:43:48 Lewis: Yeah. Irish. Scottish. French. German. Dutch.

02:43:49 Q: Oh, lots of them. Okay.

02:43:50 Lewis: Lots of stubbornness [laughs]. And she used to accuse other people of being stubborn. I'd say, "Oh. [Laughs] You wrote the book." But the thing that's great about her is, like I said, she makes new friends easily. And once—I kind of made it possible for her to reach out to her old friends in a non-threatening way. Because she was convinced that no one would respond. I said, "Let's see what happens." Sure enough, they did. So, now, she sees them regularly. It's like those thirty, forty years didn't pass at all. I'm just happy that something good came out of—came out of it. It took my dad dying to make it happen. I wish a lot of these friendships had been renewed when he was still alive, because he's not the one who drove people away. You know, that's the sad part of it. But, you know, you take the happy part that you can and so, I'm really pleased with how that's worked out.

02:45:03 Q: Good. Yeah.

02:45:04 Lewis: Yeah.

02:45:05 Q: Good. Good. Good. Okay. All right. how about religion and spirituality in your life. Has that, from your origins and then continuing?

02:45:15 Lewis: Religion had quite an effect on me in several ways, and it's almost more like an intellectual type of effect. I'm not religious at all. I'm somewhat spiritual. if I ever get in deep, deep trouble or feel really bad, I pray to God, and I say, "Yoo-hoo, are you up there still? [Laughs] Are you listening? Because if you are, I need to talk." But I'm not a practitioner of religion. I don't go to church. I don't go to spiritual meetings. But I have a deep respect for the good things that religion can do. I have a deep respect for how religion has helped some of the people I know get through some very tough times in their life.

And I think, specifically, of my grandfather Lewis, my dad's father. My dad's father was a North Dakota farm kid. His parents were homesteaders in North Dakota. He had two older sisters and one younger sister, four kids. And in 1920, the early 1920's, a tornado hit their house, blew their house apart, killed the parents and left the kids. Well, one of the older sisters was already out of the house. She was married and living, you know, five miles away. The other older sister was still home. My grandpa was fourteen years old, and his little sister was, like, five. My grandfather, for many years—I would ask him about—tell me about the tornado, grandpa. And he'd say, "We were all sitting down to supper." Out west, the evening—out west, the meals are breakfast, dinner, and supper. So, dinner is the noon meal and supper is the evening meal. "We

were all sitting down to supper,” and he said, “All of a sudden, I heard my mother say, ‘There’s a cyclone.’” They called tornadoes cyclones. “‘There’s a cyclone.’” And he said, “We all dove under the table.” And he said, “The next thing I knew, I was outside in an overturned grain silo and the chickens were walking around still alive but with no feathers. His parents were killed. The older sister and the younger sister survived. My grandpa woke up in a grain silo. And so, he had a tough life.

Then, when he was eighteen he and my paternal grandmother—

02:48:16 Q: Wait, so his older sister ended up raising them, or they—?

02:48:17 Lewis: No. I don’t know how they raised them. I never heard those stories. I just heard about the chickens without the feathers.

02:48:26 Q: That’s pretty amazing.

02:48:27 Lewis: That really stuck in my young mind [laughs].

02:48:28 Q: That’s quite amazing, yes.

02:48:29 Lewis: Yeah. And grandpa being in an overturned grain silo.

02:48:32 Q: And surviving [laughs].

02:48:33 Lewis: Yeah. I don't know how that—I think the older sisters must have pitched in and raised them. But my grandpa, later, had—had a girlfriend named Hazel Niehs. And, she was a year older than he was. And when he was eighteen, they got pregnant and they got married. And that was my dad.

Well, so my dad was born on a farm in North Dakota, and then, after that, there was a younger brother and then two younger sisters. And when my dad was nine years old and my youngest aunt, Shirley, was eighteen months old, their mother died suddenly. Like, between Christmas and New Year's. She got one of those rampaging viruses that kills you within forty-eight hours. So, here's my dad, nine years old, another seven year old boy, a three year old girl, and an eighteen month old girl, and my grandpa, who is not even into his thirties, and he's a widower with four kids. So, he had to parcel the kids out to neighbors and friends and relatives while he got his act together, because all of a sudden, here he is with no wife, and he's a farmer. And you have to have a team to run a farm. He ended up moving to town and getting a job in a creamery, and he spent the rest of his life making butter. [Laughs] So, my grandpa Lewis was a butter maker in a creamery.

My grandpa Lewis was one of the most religious people I ever met, and it was because of all this tragedy in his life. He said, if he hadn't had a really strong faith, he never could have weathered losing his parents at age fourteen, losing his wife who left him with four little kids to raise and no money. He couldn't have done it without the help of God, and specifically, Jesus watching over

him. So, he was always very religious, very devout. He was very lucky because a few years later he met a young woman who was the pianist at the church that he went to—

02:50:50 Q: Runs in the family.

02:50:51 Lewis: Yeah. And that was Margaret Fossen and he married her and she became the mother to these orphan kids. And she was the love of my life. My grandma Lewis—I never met my biological grandma Lewis, but the second woman that my grandpa married she was so wonderful. She truly was an angel sent from heaven to save that family.

02:51:20 Q: Oh, absolutely. Oh.

02:51:21 Lewis: Yeah. And I one—

02:51:22 Q: And the music started there?

02:51:23 Lewis: Hm?

02:51:24 Q: And the musicians started there?

02:51:25 Lewis: Yeah. I think it was grandma. I think it was my dad's stepmother, because she played the piano and she loved music. Well, actually, my Lewis family, even those who aren't trained, they always love to sing. They get together and they sing.

02:51:45 Q: That's beautiful. Yeah.

02:51:46 Lewis: And you know, it's nice. But grandma— years later, after my grandpa died and grandma was a widow, I spent some time with her, just her and me. I was the oldest grandchild on that side of the family. So, I guess I was pretty special, you know. [Laughs] I guess. But I once said to grandma, I said, "Grandma, you were, like, six years younger than grandpa." I said, "Why did you marry him?" [Laughs] She said, "He was a good man." And she said, "But I have to tell you, honey." She always called me honey or sweetie. She says, "I have to tell you sweetie," she said, "my family thought I was throwing my life away." I said, "Really?" She said, "He was a poor man with four little kids. What kind of a future was that?" I said, "Yeah, he was a poor man with four little kids."

02:52:39 Q: Making butter in the creamery.

02:52:40 Lewis: [Laughs] Yeah, making butter in the creamery. But she said, "He was an honest man, and he was a good man. And I loved his kids." And so, they got married, and then they had a fifth, who is my dad's younger brother, who is the only other one to complete college. His half-brother, my Uncle Doug. And she literally saved that family.

02:53:04 Q: Oh, yeah.

02:53:05 Lewis: I was always so grateful. Oh, she was so loveable. She was wonderful.

02:53:08 Q: So, what was your interaction with her? Did she live nearby, or—?

02:53:11 Lewis: No, we lived in Montana. They lived in Spokane, Washington.

02:53:15 Q: Oh, that's a ways.

02:53:16 Lewis: You know, it'd be, like, a four, five hour drive. But we'd go. We'd spend Christmas with them, or they'd come spend time with us. But they were the grandparents that I couldn't tell I was studying ballet.

02:53:30 Q: Oh yeah. The fundamentalist. Yeah.

02:53:31 Lewis: Because they were fundamentalist Christian, very conservative, and they came from that background that you only did music if it was to praise God.

02:53:40 Q: Sure.

02:53:41 Lewis: You didn't do it for pleasure. You didn't do it for anything else.

02:53:43 Q: Sure. Oh, it kept them strong.



02:53:44 Lewis: Yeah. And eventually, my dad, being a musician, just had to break away. He had, kind of, a brief falling out with his father over it. But unlike my mother's side of the family that tends to hold grudges, the Lewis side of my family has always been very forgiving. And even if they don't agree with you, they still love you. You know [laughs].

02:54:09 Q: That's good.

02:54:10 Lewis: So, that was good. Yeah.

02:54:11 Q: That was a lovely story.

02:54:12 Lewis: Yeah.

02:54:15 Q: So, do you have—looking back over your life, is there anything that you regret?

02:54:20 Lewis: I regret that I let a lot of friendships get away from me. Because I'm not a good correspondent.

02:54:34 Q: And why do you suppose that is?

02:54:35 Lewis: I think about it, and I never do it. It's like researching the paper and never writing it.

02:54:41 Q: Oh, okay.

02:54:42 Lewis: I think it's all part of the same syndrome. I would—I would concoct letters in my brain that I was going to send to someone, and I'd never have the time to write it down, and I'd never send the letter. I've lost touch with a lot of people that I wish I hadn't lost touch with.

I have to say, though, that the world of social media has enabled me to find some of those people. I mean, I have found old high school classmates. Not any college friends yet because I'm a little closer to that group just because we've had reunions. I found old high school classmates that I lost touch with that I always wondered what happened to them. I have found, I've found two girls that I knew in grade school. I was friends with one in the sixth grade, and with the other in the seventh grade. I totally lost track of them. But through other mutual acquaintances, through the social networking that is Facebook, I found them and I got in touch with them. I found my old roommate from Pan Am basic training.

02:55:57 Q: Oh my.

02:55:58 Lewis: I found her. She lives in New York. She still flies for Delta. [Laughs] I hadn't seen her since we graduated from Pan Am in May of 1973. And I saw her for the first time in over forty years last summer. There was a Pan Am reunion on Long Island. I said, "Mary Ann, I'm coming." We'd already established communication. She said, "I'll be there." So, I regret that I've lost some of those connections, and I wish I hadn't. I'm really lucky that I've been able to find a few people. I'm very lucky.

Any other regrets. Of course, you know, we all get in situations where you said something that you regretted and you wish you could take it back. I—you know, I've got my share of those. I feel very, very lucky that I'm still with the same guy that I met during our freshman orientation.

02:56:57 Q: [Laughs] That's quite amazing. Yeah.

02:56:58 Lewis: That's more his doing than mine, I have to say. He's just incredible person.

02:57:05 Q: He didn't want to lose a good woman [laughs].

02:57:06 Lewis: Well, I don't know. He, you know—I was finally convinced that it—this was kind of funny. Couple of months ago, we were going through stuff for the Goodwill. And he says, "There's a button missing off the sleeve of this raincoat." I said, "Yeah. Yeah. I've got it on a safety pin tied to the lining. I mean, pinned to the lining. I haven't lost the button. It's just off the sleeve." He said, "Well, is this something that you want to give to the Goodwill?" And I said, "Well, you can't give it with a button missing. You don't do that. It's got to be in good shape." He said, "Well, would you wear this if it had the button on the sleeve?" I said, "Sure, I would. I've been missing it." He said, "Okay, where's the sewing kit? I'm going to sew it on for you." [Laughs] I said, "Really?" He said, "You'll never get around to it. Let me do it for you." So, he sewed the button on the sleeve of my raincoat. I thought, "What a guy! Oh my god. Could you marry anybody better?"

02:58:07 Q: No. [Laughs] What about your greatest accomplishment or accomplishments? Is there something that particularly stands out that you're particularly proud of?

02:58:17 Lewis: I never became president. I never became queen. I never became famous. I got to the point where I realized I didn't have to make everybody like me. That was a liberating thing. My greatest accomplishment.

02:58:37 Q: Or just something you're proud of. Yeah.

02:58:40 Lewis: Well, looking back at it, I guess, I am proud of the fact that I grew into an independent woman who could take care of herself if she had to. I'm proud of the fact that I have had a long-standing relationship with my husband. A lot of people aren't that lucky. I'm proud of the fact—I'm pleased that I've been able to maintain good relationships with most of my relatives, even the ones who probably don't like me and I don't like them much. But, I do have—you know, people like to say family is all, family is everything. Family is important. But it's not everything. Because as my Great Uncle Arthur who taught at City College said, "You can't pick your relatives, but you can pick your friends."

02:59:39 Q: Sure.

02:58:40 Lewis: So, I've also been really glad that the friendships that I've had, the ones that I have maintained, that they're still there. I take a lot of comfort in that. I guess I'm proud—

[laughs] this is going to sound funny—I'm proud to be an American who's a good citizen and pays my taxes and does my part.

03:00:00 Q: Not everyone is, by a long shot.

03:00:01 Lewis: Right. And I've lived overseas. I've lived in London. I've lived in the Philippines. I've seen—I've traveled a lot. I've seen where government absolutely does not work. I see where people are desperate. Where they would give anything to be an American. And even though I'm not a flag-waving, patriotic type, I get a thrill when I've been away, when I've been in Asia or I've been in Europe and I walk into customs and I see the American flag. And there's a big sign that says, "Welcome home."

03:00:40 Q: "Welcome home." Yeah.

03:00:41 Lewis: Oh my god. I get teary. I said, "Oh yeah."

03:00:45 Q: It's familiar again. Yeah.

03:00:47 Lewis: And yet—and yet, you know, when my country does stupid things or the politicians do stupid things, I'm the first to think, "Oh, how embarrassing. I hope no one knows I'm an American." [Laughs] You know.

03:00:57 Q: Of course. Of course.

03:00:58 Lewis: I try to behave in what I think is a world citizen sort of way, not a brash, uncouth American elbowing around and being loud and obnoxious. I hate that when I see it overseas. I hate it. And—and I kind of cringe.

My family's been through various rough times that kind of broke part of the family apart. I have cousins who don't speak to each other. I have people who have written each other out of their wills. All that nastiness, which to me is so petty. And if I can be pleased about one thing, I've still managed to maintain relationships with those people to the point where it's good for both of us, without, you know, stepping on their toes. That's really hard. I'm the type that likes to fix things sometimes. But I've learned that some things are not fixable. So, just do what you can. Yeah.

03:02:07 Q: So just briefly, why were you in the Philippines?

03:02:08 Lewis: Ah. 2010. My husband worked for Thomson Reuters here in New York City for about eight years.

03:02:18 Q: Thomson Reuters. The news service.

03:02:19 Lewis: Reuters, the news organization. Thomson Financial is the big Canadian company that bought Reuters and now it's known as Thomson Reuters. Thomson Reuters does two things. It does the news stuff that you read about, and it also does financial services. Well,

Tom's background and—that he learned from doing his own businesses and everything—has been in financial services.

He has, at various times, worked for AIG [American International Group]. He's worked for Paine Webber. He has worked for JP Morgan. Chase. He's worked for Chase bank. He has a thorough background in the brokerage world, the lending world, the insurance world, and his specialty is customer service, help desks, corporate training, customer training. So, for Thomson Reuters, he was running a training organization of the people who would work with stock brokers, Wall Street type of people, on the software that Thomson Reuters would sell for trading and that sort of thing.

So, about two years ago—no, this was in 2010, so it's more like four years ago, they needed someone to go to Manila for two years to run the help desk out of Manila. So, we thought, what the heck. Why not. Not getting any younger. Let's go. So, we went to Manila for two years. And I was working at the time in a temporary job, but it was a project management job that I could do remotely. It was all virtual office. So, I was able to continue working at that job while we were there. The only problem was, since we were on the other side of the world—put me on the night shift. That was tough. And it was at the same time that my dad was dying.

03:04:17 Q: Oh, yeah.

03:04:18 Lewis: So, I—it was a pretty rough first year. I was not happy. And I was spending a lot of time flying back to the U.S., where I would continue to do my job in my dad's hospital

room. And after a while— he died in May of—ah, four years ago. And, after that I was just kind of worn out. I went back to the Philippines and I said to Tom, “We have another year here, don’t we? And I’m never going to see anything because I work all night and then I try to sleep all day.” I said, “This is not the way to live.” So, guess what he said? “Why don’t you quit?” [Laughs] I said, “I can do that?” He said, “Yes.”

03:05:00 Q: There’s a refrain in your life.

03:05:01 Lewis: Yeah. He said, “You can.” But I always have to be told.

03:05:05 Q: I know.

03:05:06 Lewis: That’s what’s so funny. He said, “You can quit.” He said, “Take a year off. See if the temporary agency might bring you back when we get back to the U.S. See if the job’s still there. If it isn’t, maybe—you know, it’s a temp agency. They’ll have other jobs. They’ll find you something else.” I said, “Okay.” He said, “You can be awake during the day.” [Laughs] He said, “You can take ballet classes. You can take Pilates classes. You can go to Starbucks with me across the park and have coffee in the morning before I go to work.”

03:05:33 Q: So, it’s a civilized—

03:05:34 Lewis: He says, “You can quit.” [Laughs]



03:05:35 Q: You can live. Yes.

03:05:36 Lewis: Whoa. Okay. So, I asked for leave of absence, but they said, “No leave of absence. You’ll have to quit.” So, I said, “Okay, I quit.” And then, so we spent another year in the Philippines. Much better. I mean, you know, we’d been through the family crisis. We had some friends that came and visited. We showed them around, took them to Hong Kong, Bangkok, you know, all over the Philippines. I got to know people, really wonderful people. And it turned out okay. For having had such a miserable first year, the second year kind of redeemed everything.

We came back to the U.S. in September 2012. I wasn’t able to get my job back. So, I just started looking for jobs. And then, you did ask me how I got this job at Google.

03:05:24 Q: I knew we’d get back to that. Sure.

03:05:26 Lewis: Okay. [Laughs] I got to—I’m thinking chronologically, so—

03:05:29 Q: No. No. No. This is great. This is great.

03:05:31 Lewis: I came back, I got in touch with the temporary agency that had gotten me the project management job before. They didn’t have anything for me. So, I just started looking for jobs, mostly through temporary agencies. I found that the world of temporary work is very much changed from what it was like ten years ago. Ten years ago, you got on with a temporary agency.

You got to know someone. They got to know you. As the jobs came into the agency, they would place you in jobs.

03:07:03 Q: Place you. Yeah.

03:07:04 Lewis: Doesn't work that way anymore. I could not even get my foot in the door to meet with someone in person at a temporary agency. So, for about a year, I just, kind of—I put my resume out online. I tried to get on with Adecco. I tried to get on with my old temp agency. I got one job that lasted for two months and that was it, and then, I was out on the street again. I knew that if I went and interviewed in person, I probably wouldn't get the job anyway because I'm older. And there is so much—I mean, if—I don't know that I ever would have gotten another job had this one not just, kind of, dropped in my lap.

The way it dropped in my lap was, when I put down my skills, I put on all the MS Office skills, Word, PowerPoint, Excel. Blah blah blah. Well, everybody has that on their resume. My husband is now working for a company that uses all Google and Android products. He said, "You have a Gmail account. Why don't you put down that you could do Google slides, Google docs, and Google sheets?" I said, "But I can't." He said, "I can teach you." He said, "Put it on your resume." That's how I got the job. I got the job because I had both MS Office and Google apps on my resume. And when I actually—when they called me the first time, I passed it up. Because I got a call. I was off on a trip with some friends. I thought, "Oh, yeah. Google. Right. They're sure going to hire me." So I ignored it. And then, I didn't tell Tom. I thought, "Oh my god. I think I really screwed up here." [Laughs] Two months later, the same guy calls me back from the

temp agency, says, “When I talked to you before, you waited five days to respond to my e-mail, and I had to tell you the job was filled. I—” he said, “They’d really like to talk to more candidates. Are you available?” I said, “You better believe it.” So, I call Tom. I said, “You better train me really fast on Google slides, Google docs, and Google sheets.” So, you know, we played with it, and I sent messages back and forth, and I learned to use them. And I thought, “Okay. I can figure this out.” You know, I’ll be fine with it.

So then, I interviewed, I interviewed with two people. I interviewed with the woman out in California who is my manager. Just a phone interview. Thank goodness, because she didn’t see how old I was. She just heard my voice. And then, I interviewed with Jack Chen, who I support here, who is vision impaired. A lawyer. And he asked me some pretty tough questions like— things like, “Tell me about a time when you were working a project and you really needed your manager’s help on something, and you couldn’t get hold of them. What did you do?” You know, that sort of thing. So, I think, well, you figure it out. I mean, that’s—nothing else that you can do.

03:10:06 Q: Sure.

03:10:07 Lewis: Or, tell me how you handled a really difficult situation with a customer where you had to deliver bad news. That’s a common question too. Well, he—I guess, Jack decided he liked me, and they hired me a year ago, and I’ve been here since. And I love the job. The company is making me fat—[pause] ter.

03:10:29 Q: Carolyn, you cannot say that.

03:10:30 Lewis: Fat, no.

03:10:31 Q: We're going to have a full body view of you here. Note.

03:10:32 Lewis: Um—

03:10:33 Q: Size minus zero [laughs].

03:10:34 Lewis: No. No. No. I'm learning to control myself with my visual eating. And I have— I've not only learned how to do Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides, but I've learned a whole lot more about Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, too. And I'm learning about this whole new world of accessibility and working with employees and people who are disabled. And the things they run into every day just to do their jobs. And it's not easy, as you can imagine, because disabilities come in all flavors and all sizes. And the individuals are just as individual as anybody else, and they have opinions on how they want to be helped, if they want to be helped, how they need things done, if they need things done.

But here's another thing that I've also realized, why it's great to be an American. Because of the ADA, the American with Disabilities Act, which this year is 25 years old, it's amazing what this country has done in making efforts towards accessibility for all people. You know, you go overseas. You don't see that stuff. You don't see ramps for sidewalks. You don't see Braille signs by the elevator buttons. We have those here. It's still not perfect, but you go in to almost

any elevator, and the number of the floor is also in Braille. You don't see that many other places. And we still have a lot of Americans and people living in this country with disabilities who are extremely disadvantaged. A lot of beggars, a lot of pan handlers. And it breaks your heart to see that, because you also know that, given the right opportunities, like for anybody, they would have other options.

03:12:40 Q: Right.

03:12:41 Lewis: But I'll tell you, if I were disabled in any way, I would rather be disabled in this country than in any other place in the world. Because you see it—especially in the third world countries, and it's just a horrible, horrible existence.

I've been very lucky to have a chance to learn all this new stuff. And I've been very lucky in that the guy I work with is extremely patient, has wonderful sense of humor [laughs], and, you know, he's helped me figure things out too. Which is good.

03:13:18 Q: I'm sure it's mutual.

03:13:19 Lewis: Yeah.

03:13:20 Q: I'm sure he's glad to have you. Because you said you had clients as well? In London and in California?

03:13:25 Lewis: Yeah. I've,—there's one vision impaired Googler that I help with his presentations, occasionally. And since,—we were talking about this before—since the screen reading assistive technology software that they use works very well for text but not for graphics or photos or anything, that's my main thing, is I'll help them, like, add photos or graphics or charts to a presentation they're creating. Or if someone has sent them something, and they have to go through it and approve it or not, I describe what it is. So, I do that occasionally. Um, there are two gentlemen in California that I also help. Although, now, they have their own Carolyn. She just started last week. And so, now I'm assisting her, to help her figure out how to do the job, because it's new to her, too.

03:14:15 Q: Right. Yeah.

03:14:16 Lewis: Yeah.

03:14:17 Q: Okay, This has been quite amazing. I would like to ask you though, what plans do you have for the future? Are you going to just, kind of, dance off into the horizon further [laughs]? You're obviously working very hard still, so work is part of it?

03:14:31 Lewis: Work is part of it. And my husband would very much like to retire. Couple reasons. Fifteen years ago, in his early fifties, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. And so, fifteen years later, we know we're lucky to still have him around. He's basically been a cancer patient, more or less, for the last fifteen years.

03:14:55 Q: And he does Pilates.

03:14:56 Lewis: He's in excellent health and is determined to maintain it. He watches his health. He's—he's lucky. I mean, the treatments are good these days. The prognosis is good if you catch cancer early enough. But it's a big shock when you first get the news. That's a defining moment in your life, is when—

03:15:17 Q: Oh, absolutely.

03:15:18 Lewis: —you get word—get news like that.

03:15:19 Q: Sure.

03:15:20 Lewis: But, you know, the old saying, that what doesn't kill us makes us stronger. Very much the case. But I think that when that happened to Tom, he, kind of, got the looking at your own mortality viewpoint. So, ever since then, we've been very conscious of the fact that we are getting older, we're not going to live forever, and we don't have kids to take care of us when we get old. We need to plan so that we can take care of ourselves, or things are, kind of, lined up. So, when we were in the Philippines, we were trying to figure out—we actually put together a plan. We put together Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C of what we thought might happen to us. Plan A was based on three more years in the New York area doing our same jobs, earning our same salaries, and building up our resources. Plan B was, after we leave New York, we go back to

Montana where we actually do have—we have a house in the woods that we built about ten years ago.

03:16:33 Q: Oh, great.

03:16:34 Lewis: That would be our—like, our home base. Plan C was, we also bought a condo in the Philippines [laughs].

03:16:42 Q: Okay.

03:16:43 Lewis: Mostly, as an investment. As an investment. But then, we thought, wait a minute. We don't have kids, the U.S. economy could go to hell, you know, Medicare might be revoked by some evil person. What do we do if all of a sudden the resources we're counting on for plan A and plan B aren't there anymore? Go to plan C. Got a place in the Philippines paid for. Got a little money saved up. They have excellent medical care there, especially for ex-pats. We have lots of friends. And we have lots of friends. Even though it's really, kind of, too hot and humid for me, year round, you can tough it out. If you're in Manila, there are cultural and artistic things to attend.

03:17:31 Q: Absolutely.

03:17:32 Lewis: The food is great. It is a different world, but it's fascinating.



03:17:33 Q: Another adventure [laughs].

03:17:34 Lewis: Another adventure. So—

03:17:35 Q: Uh, yeah.

03:17:36 Lewis: —and besides, when we were there in—for two years, as part of Tom’s job, since he actually ran an 800 person strong organization, worldwide. Only 200 were in Manila. But with his job came a very nice benefit. We had a full time driver and car, private car. Thank god, because [laughs]—

03:18:04 Q: Yeah, I was going to say—

03:18:05 Lewis: —I’m never going to drive in that town, I’ll tell you. Crazy driving.

03:18:07 Q: No. You need it.

03:18:08 Lewis: Oh dear. Well, Jaime Lorenzana, who was our driver—he was a professional driver, he loved working for Tom. He just loved working for Tom. And when we left the Philippines, he told us he would never drive for anybody else again, because nobody could be as good a boss as Sir Tom. [Laughs] So, Tom says to me the other day, “If we end up going to plan C, do you think Jaime and his wife would take care of us in our old age?” I said, “They would love to!” So, who knows? I don’t know. So—

03:18:45 Q: Well, those are, fascinating options.

03:18:46 Lewis: We just wanted to, kind of, line up the options knowing that we don't have kids to take care of us. And, even though we have nephews and nieces who we enjoy, I mean, they have their own parents and grandparents and kids to take care of. We just have to find a way to be self-sufficient and know that we're going to be okay.

03:19:09 Q: Right. Good. Good.

03:19:10 Lewis: So, those are our plans. We're going to keep traveling, keep adventuring, take care of the people that we need to take care of. We've got a few that we, kind of, watch out for. We'll take care of them. I'd like to say, I'll write a book, but I know I never will. [Laughs] I've got all the notes for it.

03:19:28 Q: Same pattern.

03:19:29 Lewis: I'd like to, you know—I just want to live a healthy life. I do want to re-establish connections with old friends. Because that really is true. When you get towards the end of your life, what's important is not how hard you worked at AT&T over a weekend, it's the person you met there that you lost touch with. So, that's what we're hoping to do. We're going to find long-lost cousins. Going to find old classmates. I'm hoping that someday I'll be able to see Severine

Neff again. I've tried to reach out to her several times. She doesn't really respond. So, I don't know what happened there. But I would love to see her.

03:20:15 Q: Yeah. It would be great to have a reunion. Yeah.

03:20:16 Lewis: Yeah.

03:20:17 Q: Definitely. Definitely.

03:20:18 Lewis: Yeah. So, that's it. I'm not going to be president or chairman of the board, so.

03:20:23 Q: [Laughs] We've all accepted that for ourselves.

03:20:24 Lewis: You know, I might adopt a hard to place cat or dog. Now—that'll make life, kind of, worth it.

03:20:31 Q: They're very warm and loving. [Laughs] Uh, okay, so I guess the last question would be, if you had advice to give to yourself as an eighteen-year-old, if you could go back and do that, what would you tell—?

03:20:45 Lewis: Oh, that eighteen year old.

03:20:46 Q: Or twenty-year-old, even. You know, before or after Barnard.

03:20:47 Lewis: What would—?

03:20:48 Q: What would you want to pass on, in terms of wisdom, from your experience?

03:20:50 Lewis: Don't take so long to make a decision. [Laughs] If you want to quit grad school, quit. And find something else to do. If things aren't going well, instead of being miserable, try to figure out, if not, how to fix it, how to deal with it. If—work hard, but also learn to work smart. Don't waste so much time doing stuff that's not important. And the thing that's ironic about that, is you know what's important. It's just you don't want to do it. So, you put it off while you do unimportant stuff, because it makes you feel productive and it makes you feel good. But it's not. It's a waste of time. I have never been good at that. That would be the biggest piece of advice I would give my eighteen year old self. Learn to focus. Work hard, but work smart. Take the time off when you need it. Don't keep working and just get burned out.

03:21:59 Q: Exactly. Yeah.

03:22:00 Lewis: And, tell your mom you love her every time you see her. And tell your husband you love him, and he's the best thing that ever happened to you, every time you see him. And some guys will respond back, I've heard. My husband has learned to say he loves me and I'm great, which is nice. And he sews the button on my raincoat.

03:22:25 Q: Which is incredible.

03:22:26 Lewis: It's incredible. Yep. Yep.

03:22:28 Q: Okay, I guess we'll stop. But let me just ask you if there's anything in your life, in your thoughts that you want—that we haven't touched on, that you feel should be included.

03:22:37 Lewis: As much as I wish I could live another twenty, thirty, forty years, and as much as I am envious of the young people around me, or even the young women at Barnard now—I mean, I look at this course offerings, and I think, “Oh, I'd love to be back there.” I still am grateful and I do not regret that I got to live through the late 50s and the 60s and the 70s. You cannot recreate that experience in any way. There's something about having lived through those times that makes you feel like you were a part of history, even if you were like me and just, kind of, observing from the dorm window. The fact is, I was there. I saw what was going on. I talked about it with my friends. It's not an invention. It's not on TV. It's not virtual reality. It's real reality, and I think, that's one reason when we get together again at reunions and stuff, we just pick up where we left off. It's like the time hasn't passed.

And every time I do get together with friends or at a class reunion now, I just say, “I'm so grateful to be alive.” There are times I might not have been, like when I had the burst appendix, like this, like that. I thought I was going to fall off a mountain two days ago. I'm glad I didn't. I'm just grateful to be alive, and I'm grateful to have lived during the times that we lived at because it was amazing. Really. Really amazing. Lot of stuff I would do different now, but—

03:24:32 Q: Oh, we all would.

03:24:33 Lewis: I'm glad that some of the stuff I did turned out okay [laughs].

03:24:34 Q: Oh, I think it did. I think it did.

03:24:35 Lewis: Yeah.

03:24:36 Q: Good. Well, listen, it's been delightful getting to hear a little of your life, and you've been a fantastic interviewee. So, I think we'll stop there.

03:24:46 Lewis: Okay.

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