

BARNARD COLLEGE CLASS OF 1971 ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

The Reminiscences of

Adrienne Schure

2015

## PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Adrienne Schure conducted by Jenna Davis on March 19, 2015 and by Frances Garrett Connell on September 6, 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: Adrienne Schure

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Jenna Davis

Date: March 19, 2015

Q: Could you state your name?

Schure: Yes, Adrienne Schure.

Q: How are you involved with Barnard?

Schure: I graduated from Barnard in 1971. I transferred in at the middle of my sophomore year.

Q: Okay. And where are you from originally?

Schure: I'm from Long Island originally.

Q: And so had you spent much time in the city before you came to Barnard?

Schure: Yeah. My parents brought us into the city a lot. We went to shows and museums, and so I knew I liked the city.

Q: And so how did you hear about Barnard?

Schure: I don't know! It was kind of in the air [laughter].

Q: You didn't have any other siblings that went to Barnard or anything?

Schure: I have an older sister, but she went to George Washington University.

Q: And so, what school were you at before you transferred to Barnard?

Schure: I was at Albany State [University]. When I was applying to college, my mother wanted me to go to a state school. My mother was widowed—my dad died when I was nine—and so money was an issue. I had a guidance counselor who just kept telling me that I couldn't get into Pembroke, or Jackson, or any other school I expressed interest in. So, I ended up going to Albany State, and I really didn't like it. I really didn't like being away from the city. And I was a French major, and they didn't have a particularly good French department there.

Q: But, had you heard good things about Barnard's French Department?

Schure: Yes.

Q: And I would imagine that the student body would be smaller at Barnard as well.

Schure: Yes, much smaller.

Q: So, then, you must have entered Barnard as a sophomore in the fall?

Schure: In the spring.

Q: Oh, in the spring?

Schure: Yes.

Q: So, was it the Spring of '68 that you entered?

Schure: It was the Spring of '69. So it was right after [the protests]. So the protests happened in the Spring of '68, and then there was the fall semester of '68, and then I came in the Spring of '69. So right after the big protests.

Q: So were you involved in any student organizations at Barnard?

Schure: Not formally, no. And at Albany State, I was not involved formally, but I did go to some SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] meetings, and I think it was SDS meetings. I was a little put off by how radical they were. Yeah, I don't have very vivid memories, but I just remember being very put off.

Q: And that was at Albany State?

Schure: Yeah, that was at Albany State.

Q: And what about at Barnard and Columbia? Were you also put off by their [radicalism]?

Schure: No, I wasn't. But, I didn't join any organizations. But in the Spring of '69, I was a sophomore, and there were some protests that I joined. But in the Spring of '70 is when it got really ugly. That was Kent State, [when] those two students were killed, and we just stopped going to class. And, you know, I did end up getting grades and credit for my courses, but after those two kids were killed, we just weren't going back to school. It was just too awful.

Q: Right. So, what was your role in the student protests of 1970 then?

Schure: I participated. I wasn't a leader or anything like that. But, I felt really strongly about it. And we demonstrated on campus and off campus. We went on marches, downtown I remember. And, yeah, it was just something that I felt I needed to state my piece about. And, you know, when I was younger, my parents didn't go, but I went with friends and their parents to civil rights rallies where Peter, Paul, and Mary were there and Phil Ochs, and other protest singers. And that was probably the early '60s.

Q: And would you say attending those events when you were younger prompted you to, in part, take part in the [student] protests?

Schure: Well, I think it definitely had an effect on my world view, and you know, where I grew up, was a middle class community, and people were kind of, you know, conventional. And I was kind of like that. Although, I was involved with the Student Action Movement in high school. It was kind of a protest organization. But, I do think those early civil rights rallies kind of had an effect on me. I remember when [Michael] Schwerner, [James] Chaney, and [Andrew] Goodman were killed down in Mississippi, when they were signing up blacks to register to vote. That it impacted me deeply. I don't remember how old I was, but it was well before college. So, all those things, I think, accumulated to make me more active, not super radical. I felt all of these things strongly, and I felt all the injustices strongly. And I felt the wrongness of what we were doing in Vietnam very strongly. And I just wanted to have my say about this is the wrong thing to do. We should not be doing this. And I wanted to have an effect that the government should change its direction.

Q: So it sounds like the protests you were involved in were less focused on any criticism of the university or the administration and more on the war protests?

Schure: Yes, that's true.

Q: Okay. And so, were there a lot of sit-ins or conversation groups at Barnard that you participated in?

Schure: I don't think so. I mean, maybe they existed. If they did then, I wasn't aware of it. And I guess I was mostly on the Columbia campus, not on the Barnard campus.

Q: And so, would you say that any of your involvement with those groups was something that you just personally took an interest in, or did you have a lot of friends who were involved with the same activities?

Schure: Yes, and my friends—some of whom were students at Columbia, some of whom were students at Barnard—we all participated together in the marches and the rallies. And it was not against the university. It was against the government policy. And in fact, I'm not sure about Columbia, but the Barnard faculty was very supportive.

Q: They were?

Schure: In '70, they were.

Q: And so, would any of the faculty join the students in any of the off campus demonstrations?

Schure: I don't remember, but they definitely supported us in our decisions to take part, and to break up class. They may have even called off—some of the teachers even called off classes too.

Q: So that students could participate?

Schure: Yep. And there were no penalties when we stopped going to class in the Spring of '70.

Q: So it sounds like the administration was pretty sympathetic, then?

Schure: Yeah, I think they had come around to seeing what a terrible mistake it was. And then after the kids at Kent State were killed, you know, I think they really were supportive.

Q: Right. And my understanding is that at the time period there had been some tension between students at Barnard and Columbia, some of whom were more liberal than others. Some supported this radical occupation of buildings, while others were feeling that that type of radicalism was misrepresenting others in the student body. Did you pick up on any of that?

Schure: That was '68. I don't think there was any takeover of buildings in '70. I'm pretty sure there was not. I didn't feel that tension, but it may have been because we tend to hang around with like-minded people, and the people I was hanging around with were sufficiently upset that they wanted to protest, but that they were not going to be like the Weathermen and go blow up buildings.

Q: So then, when you did go downtown and participate in some off campus demonstrations, would you say that it was mostly college students that were participating?

Schure: I think there were a variety of people. There were a lot of college students, but there were a lot of people too. And I remember that there was a March on Washington, too, in that

same spring, and a bunch of us went. It was everybody. It was not just students. It was housewives with their children, and it was mobbed, mobbed, mobbed. There were maybe a couple hundred thousand people there. Maybe, I don't really know the number [laughter].

Q: So, did you just take a bus down to get down to D.C.? Do you remember?

Schure: I think so. I don't remember [laughter]. I'm sixty-six! I can't remember anything anymore! Somebody may have had a car, and we may have driven, or we may have taken a bus. I don't remember. I'm sure we went the cheapest possible way.

Q: Right. So then would you say that after the year of 1970 that the administration tried to meet some of the students' demands? For example, I know that a lot of students in the 1960s protests wanted more of a black studies curriculum to be incorporated into the university.

Schure: Well, I don't remember whether there was that curriculum or not. But, I do remember that we had BOSS at Barnard. Do you still have BOSS?

Q: Uh, BOSS?

Schure: Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters.

Q: Yep, that's still around.

Schure: Yeah, so that started then. But, I don't remember whether there was an African Studies curriculum. I don't know. Do you have one now?

Q: There is. There is an Africana Studies Department and a kind of race and ethnicity minor that students can take.

Schure: Okay.

Q: Did you know anyone in BOSS?

Schure: No, I didn't.

Q: I think it was in the early '70s that Barnard really started to actively recruit African American students.

Schure: So this was '71, and I don't think there was a large group of African American students, but they made their presence felt in a good way. You knew that they were there and looking out for their history.

Q: How would you say that they made their presence felt?

Schure: I think there were a lot of meetings. There were always a lot of signs around. I mean, that's what I remember, a lot of signs for meetings, and I loved the name. I thought it was great,

so it stuck in my mind [laughter].

[INTERRUPTION]

Q: So then, how would you say your involvement on campus affected even your future plans after Barnard?

Schure: I think that—I remember taking my graduate school applications and dumping them in the trash in about November of my senior year. And I know that it was because I was affected by the protests, and I just couldn't see going on this traditional route through graduate school. I was sick of school. Sick, sick, sick of school. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I didn't just want to do the traditional thing. And when I graduated from Barnard, literally, I went out and lived on a commune in Oregon. And then I moved down to Berkeley, and I lived in Berkeley for a couple of years, and I did end up going to graduate school in Berkeley. And I became a teacher. I think that that was part of wanting to change how things were.

I taught in—I was lucky enough to study with really smart people who knew child development really well. And so, I ran a very unusual classroom. A lot of the responsibility was on the kids, and I guided them. Even in the younger grades—I started out teaching first grade and then I moved up the grades to fifth grade—but parents were coming to my classroom, and they'd go, "Why are you letting [the students] talk to one another? They shouldn't be allowed to talk to each other." And I'd look at them like they were crazy, and I'd say, "Well, they really learn from each other." And so, I ran a kind of open classroom. And I'm sure that all came through my

experiences in wanting to have an effect on making the world different and better.

Q: Right. So would you say that most of the students that were involved with political organizing on campus had an idealist view of how they could change things in the larger world?

Schure: I think we had a very idealistic view, yeah. It didn't all pan out the way we hoped [laughter]. I do think we were idealistic, in a wonderful way. We set out—a lot of my friends actually did go into education in one form or another. The one person who I'm still very friendly with, who was my roommate, Christine, she's still teaching.

Q: In public schools, in New York?

Schure: No, she lives outside of Philadelphia, but she taught in public schools in Massachusetts for a long time. And then she and her husband moved outside of Philadelphia, and she couldn't get a job in the public schools there, so she taught in private schools.

Q: And so was she also involved with [the protests]?

Schure: Yep, very much. Yeah, we went to a lot of those together. Every now and then we'll look at one another and go, "Do you remember when—?"

Q: Do you have a most vivid memory from any of the experiences that you had at Barnard, or—?

Schure: I have a lot of vivid memories of the professors, some of whom are still teaching there.

Professor Gavronsky, in the French Department.

Q: I don't study French, so I don't know him.

Schure: I do. I have a very vivid memory of a professor whose name is escaping me, but he—it was American Studies, and we would meet with him weekly in a sort of small seminar, and we would talk about all of these issues, and he was quite radical and also extremely well informed and smart, and that affected me a lot. And he was very proud that we were going out and demonstrating.

Q: Would all of these discussions be in French?

Schure: Not with him. He was American Studies.

Q: Oh, right.

Schure: French professors, I got to say, they weren't so liberal. Honestly, I don't know where they stood because they never really expressed it. But, nor did I get penalized, so I have to think they weren't unsympathetic.

Q: And penalized in terms of class absences, or—?

Schure: Right, or not turning in papers at the end of the year. But, they weren't vocally supporting what we did. I do remember Madam Geene, who I believe has passed away. I never could figure out if she was American or French by birth because her French was perfect and her English was perfect. I sort of suspected she was French, but I wasn't sure. And then I asked her one day, just because I had to know. And she said that she was native French, and that she came here to Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin, as a graduate student, and she took phonetics lessons privately and that's why her English was so impeccable. And I've since taken French phonetic lessons, thinking of her.

Q: What was your motivation for studying French?

Schure: I loved it.

Q: Had you gone abroad in your childhood?

Schure: No, no. I went abroad that first summer I was at Barnard. So I came to Barnard in the spring, and that summer I went abroad. It wasn't a Barnard connected program, but I learned about it through Barnard. I studied at the Sorbonne, and lived near the Left Bank, and it was great.

Q: Did you know any other students going into the program, or were you—?

Schure: A friend of mine from Wisconsin did the program with me, but I could already speak French, but she couldn't really, so we weren't in the same classes.

Q: Got it.

Schure: So as I say, at a certain point, my French was elegant, and now I say, it's no longer elegant, but I can make myself understood, so that counts. I was actually in France on 9/11. I was in an immersion French class in Provence, and it was the second day that I was there, and there was no getting back, and all I wanted to do was get home. I felt like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz. So I kind of processed the whole thing in French, and I was living with a French family, and they had young children. And I would say, for the twin towers, in French, the noun, of course I'm forgetting whether it's masculine or feminine, but I would say, *les tours jumelles*, and the kids didn't understand what I was saying, and then they would go, "Oh, *les tours jumeaux!*" because it was masculine. And I said, "Oh no!" [Laughter] I had six year olds correcting my French! How humiliating is that!

Q: Well, that's great that you did have the opportunity to go abroad while you were at Barnard. I would imagine that, you know, that study abroad programs nowadays are so much more common than they would have been back then.

Schure: Yeah, I went abroad twice, after my sophomore year, after my junior year, and both times, they weren't Reid Hall, but they were programs that Barnard connected me with.

Q: Got it.

Schure: Yeah.

Q: And were you staying in the same city for both of those experiences?

Schure: I stayed—ah, no. The first program was in Paris, and the second program was in the Loire Valley, and it was at a camp. I was working at a camp for little kids, and I was the only English-speaking person there, and my French was elegant at the end of that experience.

Q: I imagine. It sounds like total immersion.

Schure: Total immersion. No choice!

Q: So, overall, were you pretty pleased with the academics at Barnard?

Schure: Oh, yes. I got a great education, just great. And, my professors were great, almost without exception. They were really super on it. And, I worked really hard. I think I was really well prepared for college. I went to a very good high school, so you know, I came in well prepared. But, I really became a French speaker at Barnard. And also, I took Shakespeare

classes, and I took Italian classes, history classes, and bible classes. The offerings were incredible, and the teachers were great and very demanding. When I tell people that in order to take the French major when I was at Barnard, I had to pass a three-hour written exam and an hour oral exam.

Q: Oh, wow.

Schure: Yeah, they couldn't believe it! And we had to talk with the professors for about an hour in French, and they asked us questions. And most of it was about literature, so we had to be knowledgeable about the literature, but we had to be able to speak the language with good facility.

Q: Right, wow. And did you have to write a thesis at all for your French major?

Schure: I had to write a few. There wasn't one giant one. There were a few middle-size ones. I wrote one about Apollinaire and his poetry. I might even have that one somewhere. I did a couple of other ones, but I can't remember. Apollinaire sticks with me.

Q: And did you also study French in graduate school?

[INTERRUPTION]

Q: What else can you tell me [about the protests]?

Schure: Not having been part of the organizers of everything that went on, I probably wasn't even aware of who was organizing. I do know there were teach-ins, that classes were cancelled, and there were teach-ins about the war and about the history of Vietnam, both at Barnard and at Columbia. So Barnard and Columbia were not, you know, unopposed to what we were doing. I never felt like the school was, you know, going to kick me out or even frown upon what I was doing. Not sure I cared either, but Barnard was a good place. My mother used to say "I never should have let you gone to Barnard!" [Laughter]

Q: Did she know the extent to which you were involved with activities on campus?

Schure: I think so. I do remember having giant fights with her about Vietnam because she sort of swallowed the party line early on. But, then, as everybody realized how insane it was a couple years later, she got on board. I don't think she liked the idea of me protesting and missing classes, but she didn't really—we didn't fight about it. Let me put it that way. She didn't voice too many objections.

Q: At least you weren't one of the students who was actually arrested, so I'm sure that came as good news to her.

Schure: Right. Exactly. But, nothing really bad happened to the students who were arrested, did it?

Q: I don't know whether it was waived off of their records or anything, but I think there definitely were a few students who were injured.

Schure: Oh, yeah. There were students who were clubbed in the head. And I do remember this: that both in the spring of '69 and the spring of '70, when I left my dorm—I was in 616—there were busloads of tactical police force wearing helmets and sitting in a bus waiting to keep order. I don't think that it ever came to that, that they needed to. But they were there, and it was scary.

Q: And what protest was that for?

Schure: That was—I don't think it was for a specific protest. I think Columbia and Barnard got the reputation of being radicals, and there were lots of protests in the air, and they were just stationed there in case.

Q: Were students afraid when they would see something like that?

Schure: Oh, yeah. It was scary. But, it didn't really deter me. There may have been people that it deterred. I don't know. So that's mostly what I remember. It was an exciting time. It was a very exciting time. And I learned as much from that as I did in school. Different things, but it was very important to my education as a human being, and I'm glad that I went through college at that time period. And, I'm also glad that I didn't just go through college to graduate school and to a job. And I remember, there were women at Barnard that were going to work at banks or

going to work at insurance companies after they graduated, and I couldn't believe it! [I just thought] "What are they thinking?"

Q: Were some students critical of other students that would kind of be following those more traditional career paths?

Schure: I mean, I was judgmental of it. I would never say anything, but internally, I just thought, How could they do that? How could they be so disinterested in everything that's going on in the world? But, I don't recall there being clashes or big problems or anything at all. So that's what I can think of.

[END OF SESSION]

Barnard Alumni Class of 1971 Oral History Project

Interviewee: Adrienne Schure

Location: New York, NY

Interviewer: Frances Garrett Connell

Date: September 6, 2015

00:00:00 Q: Okay, this is an interview taking place with Adrienne Schure at her apartment in New York City on September 6, 2015. The interviewer is Frances Connell, and this is for the Barnard College Voices. This is the second of two interviews being done with Adrienne. Okay, so in the previous interview as I was saying, we did a lot of focus on Barnard and we will go back and talk about that again. But I'd like to start, if you're comfortable, talking about your background. Your family, your childhood, people who were influential in your life and we'll go from there.

00:00:37 Schure: Okay, great. I grew up right nearby on Long Island, and actually I was born in Brooklyn. Both my parents grew up in Brooklyn and when my sister and I were little they moved to Long Island for the schools. So that's where my formative years were, in Roslyn. A major, major thing that happened was that my father, who was an orthodontist in Brooklyn, died when I was nine. He had a very rare disease and as you can imagine, very traumatic for all of us. So that's been a big influence on me. That's, I think, made me be very independent. Much more independent than my friends, much more needing to stand on my own two feet and be able to take care of myself. My sister, too. So that kind of colored a lot of things. But we stayed in Roslyn, we went through high school there, we went to college. I started college not at Barnard but at Albany State University. It was like a cabal between my mother and my guidance counselor to have me go to a state school. Albany State was quite good in some ways, but I was

very interested in French and they didn't have a very good French department. And Barnard, of course, had a fabulous French department. So it was either there or University of Paris and my mother was like, "New York, or the University of Paris?" So I went to Barnard. I transferred there my sophomore year.

00:02:34 Q: Let's just go back a little bit. Can you talk a little bit about your early education and the schools on Long Island and Roslyn, and things you remember about that?

00:02:44 Schure: Roslyn was a great place to grow up. Our house was in a brand new neighborhood in the '50s that was adjacent to a day camp. Two day camps, actually. There was lots of open woods and lots of fields. I was a total tomboy and we used to run, and play, and climb trees, and rocks. Right down the street from my house was a swimming club that was a big, Olympic sized pool, and a kiddie pool, and tennis courts, and playgrounds. So that's what I did. Every day of the summer, all growing up I put on my bathing suit, I went to the pool, went swimming, played tennis. You know, it was great. And the Roslyn schools were very good. I have very vivid memories. In first grade, carrying home my *Dick and Jane* book and bursting with pride that I could read.

Then we had a housekeeper who came to live with us, who was German, when I was in second grade. I remember taking out my textbook and helping her learn how to read. It was just great. The classes were small. The teachers were quite lovely. It was very nice. I always liked school. I never was one of those kids that, you know, "Oh, I have a stomach ache. I can't go to school." It was very nice. It was very pro-education, supportive of education. Even all through high school I

really liked school. I had really good teachers, especially really good French teachers. I just remember always liking school.

00:04:47 Q: Can you remember some of the classes or activities that you had in high school that were particularly interesting to you, or might have led to other things?

00:04:58 Schure: I remember that as a junior in high school in our American history class we had interns from Teacher's College[, Columbia University]. It was the Vietnam War, and they were already radicalized, and it was very enlightening. I mean they weren't that much older than us when you think about it. They were, maybe, twenty-three and I was, maybe, sixteen, seventeen. They were very committed. They were very smart, very inspirational. So that was very affecting. We had also an internal—when I say internal I mean within the country, not AFS [American Field Service] overseas—but opportunities to go within the country to stay with another family. I couldn't get my mother to sign the papers to do it. It was something that I wanted to do that I never did get to do.

00:06:09 Q: Did you have a choice of cities, or was it someone local?

00:06:14 Schure: No, no, I think it was like Wisconsin or something like that. You know, totally different from where we grew up. I would have liked to have done it but never did get to do that. But as soon as I got to college I started going abroad summers. I didn't go to Reid Hall, which I regret to this day. It's what happens when you have a boyfriend too young. You don't do things

that would be good for you to do. But other things in high school, I don't know—it was pretty traditional.

00:07:00 Q: Were you involved, like, in newspaper or yearbook?

00:07:04 Schure: I was involved in the Student Action Movement, which was political.

00:07:07 Q: Okay, and what did that entail?

00:07:08 Schure: We did fundraisers, and rallies, and awareness-raising around the Vietnam War and Civil Rights, particularly Civil Rights. That's something that I used to do. A friend of mine—this was actually in junior high—her parents were very active in the Civil Rights Movement. We went and saw Phil Ochs, and went to these rallies. I was very young, very influenced by it. It became very much part of who I am, doing those things. Went to [Bob] Dylan concerts. It wasn't through school. It was really adjacent to school. The Student Action Movement was part of school and Mr. Greenberg was, again, my American History teacher who was the teacher who sponsored that club, if you will.

I didn't do the newspaper or the yearbook. I was in the French club and we went to—we came into the city and saw the Comédie Française, and different cultural things like that. And I still am a huge theater-goer, and museum-goer. You know, it's those two things, the cultural and the political, that I started doing very young and still influenced me in college. And I'm sure it's one

of the reasons I wanted to go to school in New York, and why I live in New York today, because I can do those things.

00:08:58 Q: Now, did you have—well actually two questions. One is, where did the interest in French—particularly in French—do you think, come from? Because you obviously pursued that in travels later and majors.

00:09:14 Schure: I don't know, I honestly don't know. It was a part of me that wanted to expand out of my small little growing up world. There's a bigger world out there and even now, you know the fact that I can speak French, and if I'm—I was with some friends in Eataly [New York restaurant], and there were clearly French people there, and I just started talking with them, because I can. You know? And it's great. Now Italian is next. I studied Italian for a year but not enough to be able to really speak. So, that's my next thing.

00:10:01 Q: You spoke of a particular friend's family, who had been very involved in Civil Rights, and this was quite influential on you. Were there other friends or was this a friend you've kept up with? That's really two questions.

00:10:13 Schure: Right. No, we haven't kept up. Other friends, yeah. I think that after my dad passed away my mother sort of turned inward. And so, with my friends' families I spent more time with them and travelled to some places with them that my family didn't go. It was a way of expanding my world. You know, I went to Bermuda, or—no, I really went overseas on my

own—but just within the country. I went to California with some cousins and got to really see more of the world that way.

00:11:13 Q: Clearly losing your father was very traumatic at such a young age. Can you remember what support you had at that time and how you dealt with it? Not that you could deal with it briefly and then go on. It's in practice your whole life.

00:11:28 Schure: Right. I always say, "It's not something you get over. It just becomes part of who you are." Some ways for better, some ways for worse. Let's see. No, there weren't a lot of supports. I kind of had to—they didn't really know how to deal with it in my family. So it just became—my sister and I became very close and still are very close. She lives about ten blocks south of here. So we relied on each other a lot. I really do think we saved each other's emotional lives.

00:12:14 Q: She's older or younger, I'm sorry?

00:12:16 Schure: She's older but just by fifteen months.

00:12:17 Q: Oh, okay. Very close, then.

00:12:18 Schure: Yeah. So that was the main person. I can't really say neighbors. I think just by—you know, there were teachers that I don't think I became so close to, but they were people that I looked up to. I do think that it's part of the reason that I became a teacher at the beginning

of my career. I think the teachers in their own way, not that I talked to them, or confided in them, or anything like that. But they were there, they were great role models. They were just together, admirable people.

00:13:10 Q: Now, a lot of people who ended up being in this interview group, this cohort, speak about being kind of the smart girl of the school, and this being at once kind of a blessing and a trauma. Did you ever have that sense in your growing up years?

00:13:27 Schure: You know, I wasn't one of the smartest kids in my class in school.

00:13:36 Q: Whatever that means [laughs].

00:13:37 Schure: Yeah, whatever that means. I happened to have gone through with geniuses. Honestly, I'm not exaggerating. The people in my class just—as many people as could go to Harvard went to Harvard, went to Yale, went to Princeton, Wellesley. And so I was always, probably, just below them. I think in another year it would have been different.

But now I often feel like the smartest person in the room. I probably have less patience than I should, although now it's, like, coming around again. I think when I was in my thirties and forties I had way less patience. Now I just, you know, just go with it. I will give what insight I can into the situation as I see it. But I do often feel like I'm seeing things that other people aren't seeing. Aspects to this situation, or levels of understanding that I'm seeing that I'm not sure

everybody else is seeing and I try to make that clear as I see it. And you know, sometimes I can, and sometimes I can't.

00:15:15 Q: Good, good. What would you say—or who—I don't know if you can answer this—was most influential, maybe prior to your college years in your life? You've mentioned your sister.

00:15:28 Schure: Right, my sister was a big influence. I think friends were a big influence. I have to really think about this. It's a hard one.

00:15:57 Q: If it comes to you.

00:15:57 Schure: I'll keep thinking about it, yeah.

00:15:58 Q: If it comes to you we can go back to that, sure. And your mother. You said, obviously, losing her husband, losing your father forced her to go inward. What did she do with her time and her life? And what kind of a model was she for you?

00:16:15 Schure: My mother was very smart. But not that educated. So her family was poor and she had to drop out of school. She graduated from high school and then she couldn't really go to college and she had to help support the family. But she was incredibly organized, so everything ran like clockwork in our family.

It's interesting now because I watch some of my friends with their kids and their kids are quite smart. But the way they run their household is very disorganized. So they're always late, their kids are late, they're not sure when they're going to get home instead of making sure that they get home because their kid has school. In my family we had dinner together, clothes were always ready, people showed up on time, and it was just kind of expected. I think that was really due to my mother and her always putting her kids first, her wanting her kids to have everything that they needed to get through life, to get through school, to do their work. We had our desks and we had time set aside for us to do our homework. And also as a teacher I would watch families just—like they couldn't get it together. It really makes such a difference. My mother deserves a lot of credit for that because she struggled. Money was a struggle and she was alone and she wasn't always sure of whether she was doing the right thing and we didn't make it that easy for her. She still was able to provide us with an atmosphere in which we could thrive.

00:18:17 Q: Now, did she work outside the home?

00:18:20 Schure: She did, she worked as a secretary.

00:18:21 Q: Okay, right. So you needed to be organized with the two children and doing that as well.

00:18:26 Schure: Right, exactly. She also loved theatre, she loved the movies, she loved opera, and she brought us into the city to see—you know, when the Mona Lisa was here, and then Anthony Quinn. I just have this memory of—and my mother spotted him and, you know, it was

like such a thrill. She just made sure that we did those things. And we loved them. Took us to The Nutcracker. She wanted to make sure that we got exposed to those things. And they were things she loved too.

00:19:13 Q: And where did your family come from, originally? What was the ethnic background there?

00:19:17 Schure: My mother's father was a blacksmith in Kiev and her parents moved here before she was born. My father's family was from Lithuania.

00:19:31 Q: A lot of Lithuanians.

00:19:33 Schure: Yeah?

00:19:34 Q: So I've heard. Everyone I've interviewed [laughs].

00:19:36 Schure: It's interesting because I have a very dear friend whose family is Lithuanian and they're Catholic. We're Jewish. I was so surprised but I always think of Lithuania as Jewish but clearly not.

00:19:50 Q: Fascinating. It's amazing to find out where everybody came from [laughs].

00:19:55 Schure: Right.

00:19:56 Q: How about relationships during your teens. Was there a special boyfriend or anyone that you want to talk about? [Laughs]

00:20:07 Schure: I had a special boyfriend but I actually had—you know, my best friend, really, was a boy named Barry. We were very tight and we would hang out at each other's houses and everybody used to congregate at Barry's house because his parents were very mellow. They just let us hang out. They didn't bother us. And it wasn't like they didn't care, they certainly cared, but it was like the opposite of my house. The downside of my mother being so organized was that she was watching our every move. So hanging out at Barry's—you could just be there. So we'd meet there, and just chat, and hang out together, make plans of what we were going to do for the weekend. And Barry and I would talk on the phone before the New York State Regents. I would have been studying for weeks and he had just started studying, like the night before. I always did better—but not that much better—on tests. And we're still friendly. To this day we're still friendly. He has three boys and a third wife. But, you know, it's—whenever we get together it's like no time has passed. We just pick up where we left off.

00:21:49 Q: That's great. Okay, so this was a period—I mean you've sort of hinted already—of tremendous political, social, racial changes. Let's start maybe with some of the social changes. You're coming from a background, your mother is quite aware of everything you're doing. You're in a cosmopolitan community there, it sounds like, in terms of people knowing about the world.

00:22:19 Schure: Yes.

00:22:20 Q: So what were some of the first things—what did you—let me get my mouth going right [laughs]. The whole women’s movement, or the sexual revolution. Any of those issues, any of those affecting us.

00:22:34 Schure: I used to make this joke of one summer when I went to Europe my mother was like, “Don’t hitchhike, don’t have sex, don’t do drugs.” [Laughs] And I would get to Europe and, you know, within twenty-four hours we did all those things. It was like I just didn’t have anything to talk to my mother about at a certain point. It was just, you know, it was too different. And I think that of everything the Women’s Movement probably had the biggest influence on my life.

You know, I didn’t grow up in one of those families where they said, “You can be anything. You can do anything.” My mother just thought that we should be teachers because it was safe. When I actually became a teacher it was almost in spite of everything that my family said growing up. I came into, “You can be whatever you want to be, or do whatever you want to do,” sort of through the back door. Through the back door of being at Barnard and of the background of the Women’s Movement. There were all these incredible people, in my class as well as in the world, just striking out and being things that we had never thought that we could be. Whether it was doctors, lawyers, CEO’s, whatever. So I do think that the Women’s Movement had the biggest influence on me.

00:24:35 Q: And when do you think you became aware of it? I mean it was amorphous and it was all-surrounding.

00:24:42 Schure: I think it was—

00:24:46 Q: High school? College?

00:24:50 Schure: I think it was college. I think it was right when I got to college and—well—I think maybe more end of high school and beginning of college. That my world started expanding, certainly, at the beginning of college. Then as the Women’s Movement really became strong and became a movement and not just a kind of amorphous thing, then things started crystallizing. And when I was graduating I’d gone through a period of, “Well, I’ll go to graduate school.” And then at a certain point at the beginning of my senior year I realized, “I’m done with school. I do not want to go to graduate school.” And I remember, you know, dumping all the applications in the garbage and kind of freaking out. Because it was scary and I didn’t really know what I wanted to do. But I knew that I wasn’t ready to go to graduate school. Can we just turn this off for a sec?

00:26:02 Q: Of course.

[INTERRUPTION]

00:26:05 Q: Right. We’ll continue.

00:26:06 Schure: So in terms of my personal growth and my personal satisfaction, it was definitely the Women's Movement more than anything that changed me inside and out. Yeah.

00:26:28 Q: Now was this something that you kind of came to on your own or do you feel like you were influenced a lot by your peers? Were you doing a lot of reading? Where was your guidance, I guess I'm asking.

00:26:43 Schure: Yeah. Well I certainly did a lot of reading. Simone de Beauvoir, and just following people like Gloria [M.] Steinem. She was certainly a role model. But it didn't even have to be so radical. It was just this sense of inner growth and realizing your potential. You know, it's very interesting because I didn't really put these things together until right now, but I've been meditating for almost ten years now, and I think that there's a real connection there. Not necessarily as a woman but just as a person. I used to think of women's liberation as everybody's liberation, that when women were more free to realize their potential, do what they wanted to do in life, then men could be too. It's very disappointing that that really isn't what has happened to a huge degree. But I do think that just as a human being I have—it's been a focus of my life to be able to be able to be everything that I can be, internally and externally, and just understand what that is, as well as to cultivate the qualities that I want to cultivate and not what somebody outside me is telling me to do, whether it's a husband, or a father, or a teacher, or you know. If I want to cultivate my kindness, and my compassion, and my ability to help other people as much as I can, then that's my choice. That's what I want to do. And I don't want to be a CEO, I don't necessarily want to be the boss of a giant corporation.

I think that the Women's Movement started that and the Civil Rights Movement, I think, planted those seeds early on. And my family was kind of, really, like that. My father—I remember we had a housekeeper who lived with us and we weren't ever allowed to call her our maid. She was Maria, she was our housekeeper, and our friend, and she helped us. That was just the way it was. So I think that it started pretty young.

00:29:49 Q: Sure, sure. Do you remember any particular fears that you had over the years? Or even now?

00:29:59 Schure: I never had a lot of fears. I have more fears now than I ever did. Especially physical. I was in a car accident a few years ago, a pretty bad car accident, and so I'm more fearful now than I was. But I don't remember having so many fears. I mean fears of being rejected, yes, always.

00:30:36 Q: Can you say more about that? [Laughs]

00:30:38 Schure: Well, it's a hard one to put into words.

00:30:53 Q: Is this in relation to jobs or relationships?

00:30:57 Schure: It's more in relationships. It's not so much in jobs. I always—with jobs, my friends, they can't believe it. Who gets a job a sixty-five, you know? Adrienne gets a job at sixty-

five. It's unbelievable. I think that it's more in relationships. Just that, you know, that very sensitive inner core of not wanting someone to devalue who you are.

00:31:37 Q: Yeah, that's huge. Okay, let's look back at Barnard again. So you were transferring. You had gone for a year and a half already at Albany State? And your decision to move at that point had to do with the French. You wanted to have a better—

00:31:59 Schure: It had to do with the French and it also had to do with I didn't like being up in Albany. Any time I've not lived in New York—and I've lived in Berkeley, and I've lived on the Monterey Peninsula, and I've lived in Cambridge [Massachusetts]—any time I didn't live in New York I always felt like I was missing out on something. So being in New York was great. So that was part of it too. I didn't want to be in Albany. I wanted to go to school where there was a very good French department and I also was very, I think, drawn to what went on in Sixty-Eight. It was a very big thing. It was the center of—politically—what I believed in. So Barnard was also very attractive for that reason.

00:33:01 Q: What did you know about it from your school up there in Albany? Was there a lot of communication between the two schools or just the news?

00:33:11 Schure: It was the news. Plus, people that I'd grown up with had gone to Columbia and I would run into them when I was back visiting. I heard about somebody that I knew from my neighborhood growing up was a student at Columbia, and he'd been very active in the

demonstrations and taken over the administration building. And following the news. I did always follow the news very closely. So I knew what was going on.

00:33:46 Q: So it continued when you were there.

00:33:49 Schure: Yes it did.

00:33:50 Q: With Kent State and various other—the whole war issue. What was your involvement at that point? I know you've already spoken a little bit about this but you can say more [laughs].

00:33:58 Schure: Right. It was—you know, my junior year and I lived in my dorm at six-sixteen. And we would get up and there'd be busloads of tactical police force sitting with their helmets on, just waiting for something to go wrong. It never really got violent when I was there, second semester sophomore year, and junior year, and senior year. But there were lots of demonstrations and I took part. And Kent State was just horrendously heartbreaking. The war in Vietnam escalated and it was just so wrong from where I was sitting. I just couldn't imagine that our country was taking that turn, and it was. And we went to Washington, and we just protested, and didn't go to class. I think that by participating in the demonstrations and being part of that it just made me feel like the community that I was part of supported me in this. Even though we didn't go to class. You know, I didn't feel that I was protesting against Barnard ever. I felt that Barnard was part of taking a stand against these things that were happening in the government. That was where the protest was directed. It was not directed at Barnard, particularly.

00:36:00 Q: Yeah, I think we had a platform from which to be ourselves, and be honest, and discover all that. Martha Peterson—we don't talk much about her, but I think she was probably a very good president in the old-fashioned mode, for that time.

00:36:14 Schure: She was kind of old-fashioned and yet she wasn't. She didn't—we weren't disciplined for—my junior year I think classes were just cancelled, basically.

00:36:28 Q: I think, again, yeah.

00:36:29 Schure: In '70.

00:36:33 Q: I think senior year and part of sophomore year were the only normal—not that the world was normal. So do you—no sense of resentment that maybe you were cheated because you lost a lot of academic hours?

00:36:48 Schure: No.

00:36:49 Q: It was all part of—

00:36:50 Schure: It was all—it was part of what I was doing in my life then, and Barnard actually supported it. We didn't miss that many academic hours. We mostly missed finals. Do you really need to take the final to show how you did in a course when you've been in the course

the whole semester? I don't think so. When I tell people that in order to graduate in my senior year I had to take orals as well as a three-hour written exam in French, you know, people are pretty impressed that that's what we had to do to graduate. So I mean I got a great education at Barnard, I really did. And I'm very happy about it. Because of where I went to high school, college wasn't hard. I was very well educated. But Barnard was a wonderful extension of my education.

00:38:01 Q: How about the whole transition, coming in second part of sophomore year. Socially, how did that—do you feel like you had support through Barnard? Were you on your own, finding friends? What are your memories of making that connection?

00:38:17 Schure: It's very interesting. When I came to Barnard in the middle of my sophomore year there were "teas."

00:38:24 Q: Yes, tea and cookies, yes [laughs].

00:38:26 Schure: Right. It was kind of hilarious. But I met someone right away. I met my boyfriend right away.

00:38:34 Q: Not at the tea and cookies place [laughs].

00:38:36 Schure: Right, right. I think he was an RA in the dorms at Columbia, and he was a graduate student in engineering at Columbia. So that was fine but I didn't really make a lot of

friends at Barnard. In that first semester in dance class I met Christine who was my roommate and we're still friendly. She is friendly with one other person from Barnard who actually dropped out of Barnard, whom I also knew—Wendy.

00:39:21 Q: Wendy Dowager [??]?

00:39:23 Schure: Wendy's last name is—

00:39:26 Q: I can't remember either. It's okay.

00:39:27 Schure: I can't remember. And then Sharon, who's very, very ill, is dying. She got juvenile Parkinson's. So even in our thirties she was sick. And she had two daughters, and she brought up her daughters, but she's completely bed-ridden now. And it's awful. But Christine is essentially the only friend that I have from Barnard. And it's lovely to go to events and see women now that I think are so great. It's funny, as I've gone through my adult life, I have met a lot of women who went to Barnard. They're fantastic. I didn't know them then. They may be a couple of years ahead of me, or a couple of years behind me. But, you know, some women that I know are just fantastic Barnard women. But it was hard to make friends at Barnard. It was kind of me and my man against the world. Do you hear that a lot?

00:40:34 Q: Well, in my case I was down at Prince Street all the time, so I missed out on a lot of Barnard [laughs].

00:40:40 Schure: Yeah, yeah. And Barnard didn't help. But I'm not honestly sure I know what Barnard could have done to help that. Being in the city is also—it's a blessing and a curse in a lot of ways because the city is your campus. So if you're into dance you go to dance, and if you're into theatre you go to theatre. You know, because the campus is so huge, it makes it harder. In a more rural place you gather at the campus, so that's where everything happens.

00:41:21 Q: Yeah. No, that's exactly right. So were there any activities at Barnard that you remember being a part of? Was there, like, a French club or anything like that?

00:41:33 Schure: I didn't do that.

00:41:34 Q: No? You majored in French.

00:41:40 Schure: I majored in French, yes.

00:41:42 Q: Did you ever have Serge Gavronsky?

00:41:46 Schure: I did. Yes, and he lives right across the street, and I see him. I remember this. One year I worked at what's now Sesame Workshop, Children's Television Workshop. We developed one season of programming with one of the French television channels. Because my French was better than their English I did all my business in French. And I ran into Serge Gavronsky at Fairway. You know, I hadn't seen him in a hundred years. I said, "I was a student

of your more years ago than I care to remember.” And he said, “I’m sure it’s way more years than I care to remember.” And I told him the story of what I had just done, and it was just great.

00:42:51 Q: You would have been of the success stories, for sure.

00:42:54 Schure: Oh, really?

00:42:55 Q: I’m sure. I don’t know many people who use their French in that manner. That’s great, good, good, good. So, anything else about Barnard in particular that you feel you haven’t shared, and then we’ll kind of go on with all those other years after.

00:43:09 Schure: Right, all those many other years. No, I think that’s it. I mean I’m so happy that I went to Barnard. I just—I think Barnard gave me a lot of self-confidence, a lot of great role models, and a great education. It just was a wonderful jumping off point for the rest of my life. You know, when I left Barnard, just so we can segue here, I moved to California where nobody ever heard of Barnard. So there I was, I went to one of the best colleges in the country and nobody ever heard of it. And when I moved to California I really was kind of a hippie, I didn’t know what I wanted to do. So I took a lot of different jobs. And one of the jobs was at—

00:44:24 Q: Now where were you with your boyfriend at this point?

00:44:26 Schure: No, we had split up. So I was on my own.

00:44:29 Q: So, what was your living situation at that point, out in California? And whereabouts were you?

00:44:31 Schure: I was in Berkeley and I was living in a group house.

00:44:39 Q: You said you were taking a lot of different jobs.

00:44:43 Schure: Yeah, so I did a lot of different jobs. But somebody that I knew there was somebody from Columbia. So in my life I'm friendlier with the men that I knew at Columbia than with the women that I knew at Barnard. So Robbie, who had graduated from Columbia and was living in a different group house—and I introduced him to his wife because I went to graduate school with Carol and they met through me and they're still married and living in Salt Lake City. But through Robbie I met other people that I became quite friendly with.

But, you know, doing these different jobs—one of them was in a pre-school and there was a woman there who told me about this program at Cal Berkeley [University of California, Berkeley] that I went to, it was at the Ed school [Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley], and it was a Master's Degree in early childhood. That was an unbelievable year. That was also such a pivotal year because what we did—in California they call it a teaching credential. And in order to teach in California you have to have a year of graduate school. And of course they didn't pay you on a Master's scale. But when you go anywhere else they pay you on a Master's scale, because it's essentially a Master of Arts in teaching. And what you do is you are in a class with a

master teacher all day long, in a classroom, and then after school you take your regular graduate school classes and then at night is when you do all your reading and writing.

00:46:31 Q: Intense.

00:46:33 Schure: It's very intense. It's an unbelievably intense year. But I learned so much. And it's so interesting now, because everything that's happening in education, it's kind of coming full circle again. Because then, in the '70s, it was open classroom and letting the kids discover what they're interested in and supporting them, making sure they have the basics. And now the pendulum is kind of swinging back there now that the whole crazy testing thing, I think, is losing its power. So that year in Berkeley really started me on my career. And after a few years teaching in California I moved back to the east coast and lived in Cambridge for many years, and taught in Brookline Massachusetts, which really is one of the best school districts in the country.

00:47:39 Q: Yeah, crème de la crème, yeah.

00:47:40 Schure: Oh, it's unbelievable. So I taught there.

00:47:44 Q: And what were you teaching?

00:47:46 Schure: I taught mostly fifth grade. I taught elementary school, yeah.

00:47:52 Q: Fifth grade is a good year as I recall.

00:47:53 Schure: What?

00:47:53 Q: I think fifth grade is a good year.

00:47:55 Schure: Fifth grade is such a fabulous year. Kids are ten, turning eleven. And they kind of have their basic skills down and they're starting to think abstractly. So you can do amazing things with them. I still have projects that my students did. I have one that these two girls did. It's an illuminated manuscript about Eleanor of Aquitaine.

00:48:23 Q: Oh my goodness! [Laughs]

00:48:24 Schure: That's Brookline.

00:48:26 Q: That's impressive, yes.

00:48:28 Schure: And I look at it every now and then and I still get chills. It's just—what the kids were able to do. Brookline was a fabulous place to teach.

00:48:46 Q: So you're living in Cambridge, living in Brookline.

00:48:47 Schure: Living in Cambridge, working in Brookline, and then I went back to graduate school. I left teaching and went back to graduate school at Harvard. I went to the Ed school there

[Harvard Graduate School of Education] and got a Master's of Education. And they had a program in research and children's television. What I said was that I wanted to paint on a larger canvas, that I felt that I could reach more kids. So did that year and then at the end of that year I met someone who lived in New York. I moved to New York because of him and I worked at Children's Television Workshop. And that was also quite a wonderful year.

00:49:38 Q: And what were you doing there?

00:49:39 Schure: I was the research director on *3-2-1 Contact*, which is a science show for kids.

00:49:49 Q: Had you trained with a lot of video skills as well or was it more programmatic?

00:49:52 Schure: No. It was more programmatic, it was more about doing the research. That program used to be that there was a practicum. And the kids that graduated before me did a lot of video production. We didn't really do video production. But it led to video production and I took classes on my own at Emerson in video production. Because that was one thing we didn't get. But it was just—it was a fascinating year. It was just fabulous. And it did lead directly to my job at Children's Television Workshop. Gradually though, I moved out of television and into—I guess you could say computers. I was always really more in it for, “What was the experience the kids were having?” That was always the most important thing to me, was, “What are they going to learn from this? What skills are they going to pick up? What skills are they going to apply? Will it help them move to the next level of where they need to go in their education?” So after I left the workshop I worked in science education for a number of years building a curriculum, a

hands-on, inquiry-based curriculum for elementary school. My focus has pretty much been elementary and middle school.

Then when I left science education I moved into online education. I worked at Scholastic in one of the first online services for kids in grades three to eight. And we would do things like have them talk in real time with a scientist who worked in the treetops in Costa Rica. We would talk to classes in Australia, New Zealand, also in real time. They talked to Miep Gies who was Anne Frank's friend in the Netherlands. They got to ask her questions. We did a real-time interview with Rosa Parks before she died. It was unbelievable the things we did. The kids worked with authors. They worked with Eric Carle and other authors. It was fantastic. It really was fabulous. And I think that kids won't forget that they did that.

00:53:13 Q: And what was the technology? How did you actually set that up?

00:53:16 Schure: It was America Online. It was sort of pre-internet. Then we moved to the internet and interestingly the internet was bigger and more people, but the technology couldn't do quite as much yet, then. That was like the '90s, the late '90s, middle-to-late-'90s. I was working online before my friends knew what a modem was. It was very exciting and I always say, you know, when I interviewed for the job I went out that afternoon and got a modem and I never looked back. And now it's way over my head. I can't keep up anymore. But it was pretty fabulous.

And then I went from there to Discovery where we did science curriculum. We also did history. When I started at Discovery there were five of us working in the education group and now—and we built up that website from a very static website to one of the five most used websites by educators and kids in the country. Now the education group at discovery is huge and they're creating tech books—interactive text books, they call them tech books—in science, and they continue to do great things.

00:54:51 Q: Now, I actually lived not that far from Discovery when I was in Silver Spring raising my family. Now, were you ever down in that area?

00:54:58 Schure: Yeah. I used to commute to Bethesda and I was there when they moved to Silver Spring.

00:55:07 Q: Okay. Yeah, it's quite a building.

00:55:09 Schure: Yeah, it's quite a building.

00:55:10 Q: Quite an office, yeah.

00:55:11 Schure: To this day I say Discovery was my favorite job. It was my favorite job because they were great, you know? John Hendricks was the president when I was there and he totally believed in education, he supported education. So we had money to do great things and we did, and we started them. Now, I don't know if they're profitable or they're not profitable

within their education group. I assume they are. You know, we were the base for that. We were the take-off point for that. So that was great. It was fun and it was enlightened. It was great fun.

00:56:00 Q: Now, you said at one point earlier in this interview that sometimes you feel like you're the smartest person in the room. Did you ever have that experience during those years working?

00:56:11 Schure: Have which experience?

00:56:12 Q: Where you felt like you were not necessarily being heeded. That you had the answers there and no one else was really listening. I don't know if it was a male-female thing, or what—personalities?

00:56:24 Schure: Discovery less so. Although, yes, there were times when I had that experience. There was a time when—this was at Discovery. It was worse at Scholastic. But we were doing a project that was middle school science and my boss wanted to hire a company that I said, “Paul, don't hire them. I know I've heard through the industry, through my contacts, they're not that good. The work that they put out isn't that good and it's going to be problematic. We can find somebody else to do it for the price that we can pay.” And he just—he needed to lock it in and he just, you know, “This is what it has to be.” And it just turned out to be a disaster. We ended up firing them and hiring a different company. And that I did feel that was a male thing. And I did feel that, as a woman, our voices did not carry as much sway as the men. And I also don't know if—well, I was going to say I don't know if it was that we didn't raise our voices loud enough.

But I raised my voice very loud in that case, and didn't carry the day. There were outside consultants who were men who were urging him to use that company and, you know, there was just so much I could do. I did it, and it didn't go my way.

00:58:28 Q: But in general, and it's kind of a two-pronged question, do you feel that you were discriminated against at any point during your years? I mean you're still working.

00:58:40 Schure: Yeah.

00:58:40 Q: And we haven't gotten through the whole career yet [laughs].

00:58:54 Schure: That's very hard. I think that there have been times when I wasn't hired and a man was in positions that I would have liked to have had. There was one with the KIPP Schools fairly—you know, within the last four or five years—that a job that I would have really liked that I wasn't hired for and a man was. Is it because he was a man? I don't know. I can't say that for sure. I think that because I wasn't in one of those professions like law or government where it was, I think probably, more of something to worry about. Where it was more obvious perhaps. So I can't really say that, that I was discriminated against because I was a woman.

01:00:00 Q: Let's go back again and look at some of the political and social issues that you were aware of, or that you've been aware of in the last forty years. Anything that particularly stands out, or any causes or movements that you feel you've been involved in? Clearly education is a core, and that's huge.

01:00:24 Schure: Right. You know, it has been the core of what has been important to me. I still feel so strongly about it and so committed about it that it's the great equalizer and honestly I feel that things have gotten worse, not better. I think that there's a two-tier education system in the cities. I think it's where the poor kids go, the kids of color, and they don't get as good an education as the suburbs where the white kids go. I've tried to focus my energies in the cities and in helping the schools here. But I don't think it's gotten better. I don't.

01:01:19 Q: Is it a question of the money not being put into that priority, or have we gotten confused with educational jargon that's pulled us in the wrong direction? What might be some of the causes that you're seeing or that you've seen?

01:01:38 Schure: I think that it's very subtle racism. And the other huge thing that people don't give its due is poverty. Kids who come from families that are poor, their parents don't know what to do to help their kids as much. And they don't have that political power that wealthier white people have. And not even wealthy, but just when you have more means. So I think that's a big reason for it. I don't know. The jargon's in there but I wouldn't blame the jargon. It doesn't help, certainly.

That's been at the core of so much of what I do. As a person, you need to be educated to be able to take advantage of what the world has to offer. It's such a basic right that so many kids aren't getting that it's really at the core of what I do, of who I am, of what I do with my career. So,

have I gotten involved in movements and other things? Not so much. But it's been my career and it's been my passion for my whole life.

01:03:31 Q: So let's go back a little bit more in terms of the chronology. We had you at Discovery. And then where did you go from there and where are you now with this job? At sixty-five. Oh my gosh!

01:03:43 Schure: Right, right.

01:03:45 Q: And you can be as detailed as you want.

01:03:47 Schure: So, let's see. When I left Discovery I went out on my own and I started my own business, and I was a consultant, and I worked developing curriculum, mostly.

01:04:03 Q: Still in science?

01:04:05 Schure: No, in everything. In reading, but always in creating materials that would help teachers make learning something that was interesting and compelling for kids. That's always been something that's been important to me too. When I taught I always ran the kind of classroom that I never wanted the kids working at a level that was too hard for them, or too easy for them. They shouldn't be bored, they shouldn't be twiddling their thumbs, and just "Oh, I can do this." And then go on to play games. They should be challenged and they should be working at something that interests them and challenges them. So in developing curriculum I always look

to say, Well, this is what some kids can do, and then the kids that can't quite get there, then this is also really interesting. And they can work here so it brings them up to here. And then the kids that already have mastered this, they should be working here so they're not bored.

So that's always been something that I focused on. And then, let's see—and then I was offered a position in Denver at McREL [Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning]. Now, McREL was one of the ten regional education labs that had been funded by the federal government since 1965. There are ten of them around the country. And their job was always to do research on what are the most effective ways of teaching and learning out there. And what does the research say about that? And then how can we disseminate that information so that it gets to classrooms all around the country? So I was offered this position at McREL, they actually created a position for me as the director of product development. So I moved to Denver and I worked out there for a couple of years with McREL helping them take all their research and make it available. So we did books and we did training manuals and what McREL did a lot of was, they went into schools and they had helped turn around schools. So schools where the kids were failing, they would go in and they would train the teachers, train the principals, work with the central administration to turn it around. And they did.

And so what we did was we took what they did in those schools, and at the district level, and we made training manuals so that they could then use it everywhere. We also published a lot of books. We published vocabulary books, and technology books, and books for teachers of ELL [English language learners] students, and books for regular classroom teachers who had ELL students in their classrooms. Because everywhere in this country there are pockets of kids who

come here—they don't speak English—but the teachers were never trained. And how do you help these kids? So we did that too. And that was great.

And then, of course, it always comes down to New York real estate. I had sublet my apartment—I own this apartment and I had sublet it and then it came time to, “Well, am I going to sell my apartment? Am I going to move to Denver permanently?” And when it came down to, “I'll never be able to live in New York again, really, if I sell this apartment.” I decided to move back. And I came back here and I worked in online, video-based courses for teachers. So, professional development of teachers which is a very exciting field because it's really where things are going to change. When teachers really know best practices, then they're going to be able to do that and help all their kids. So I did that for a couple of years.

01:09:07 Q: And these would be something that a school district would use?

01:09:09 Schure: Teachers could do it on their own, or school districts could buy them for all their teachers—that's the best way to do it. But teachers could pay for it on their own, and do it for their own personal and professional growth. I was doing that for a few years and then I had a car accident and I really couldn't work for a while. So I just kind of stopped doing that and I focused on getting better.

Now I'm working for a company that creates supplementary curriculum for teachers to use with students in the classroom. We develop curriculum and it's my job at this company to focus on the strategy. What content should we be developing that teachers need that will help them teach

what they need to teach? you know, especially now with the Common Core State Standards, teachers are being asked to do a whole lot more than they ever were before, and students are being asked to do a whole lot more, and a lot of them can't. A lot of the teachers and the students, when I say, "They can't," it's because they don't know how. So what our teacher books do is they teach the teachers how to teach in this new way that's more rigorous, and where more is demanded of the students and we scaffold it so that the teachers are helped to get there. "First, this is what you're used to doing, so do that—only add this in. And then when you've added that in, try adding that in."

01:10:56 Q: Could you speak a little bit to maybe what a unit would look like? I know that's hard.

01:11:03 Schure: Well, one of the things is in reading. Students are being asked now to go into the text and do what we call close reading of text. It used to be, for a number of years where it was going was, students would read something and they were asked, "Well, have you ever experienced anything like that in your life?" And write about that. Or, "What do you think of that?" And, "What's your opinion of that." Or, "What would you do in that situation?" You know—that kind of thing. And now students are being asked to go back into that text and to say, "So, what happened?" So that you understand it on the most basic level, if you're going to go off Bloom's Taxonomy. So, "Okay, do you understand what happened? And can you then apply that to a new situation?" But that very same thing that comes from the text. Which is very different and it's very much more rigorous. It's asking the kids to understand the content on a deeper level

in order to be able to internalize it for themselves and then say, “Well, how might that look in a new situation?”

01:12:34 Q: Interesting.

01:12:35 Schure: Yeah. It’s much more demanding. It’s demanding of the teacher and it’s demanding of the students too.

01:12:47 Q: Great. Is this something that you have a lot of flexibility, this particular position now? Are you a nine-to-five sort of person or can you work outside?

01:12:53 Schure: I do, actually. I have a lot of flexibility. I can work from home if I need to. I can work from there. I go to conferences and meet other people and try to develop partnerships with other companies. So it’s pretty exciting, yeah.

01:13:14 Q: Okay. Let’s look a little bit again at your—kind of the trajectory of your life apart from the career. Have there been significant relationships? You didn’t marry. So, no kids.

01:13:29 Schure: I didn’t marry and I didn’t have kids.

01:13:31 Q: Well that’s okay; a lot of people didn’t marry and still have kids [laughs].

01:13:33 Schure: Right, right. I didn't marry, I didn't have kids, and now that my friends are all having grandkids it's—you know, it's a regret. No question that it's a regret. I think that in some ways you build a richer life. You certainly have more connections, more people that are there for you. And I'm sorry that I don't have that, I am. On the other hand, I don't think I would have been able to do a lot of the things that I've been able to do had I had so many people depending on me. So I think that with meditation—I mean who could sit for a half-an-hour, an hour and essentially do nothing in their lives? You know, when you have kids, and when you have grandkids. You know, I don't think you can. And I think that I've learned things and I've developed in ways that I definitely would not have been able to had I had a family.

01:14:48 Q: Sure, no regrets there, really.

01:14:50 Schure: Yeah, no. You know, regrets? Yes and no. You know, it balances out—it has balanced out for me, certainly.

01:15:01 Q: So, two things you raised there. One, you're family originally was Jewish—I mean you're still Jewish. But you've become very involved in meditation, you said, in the last ten years. So is that, sort of, your spiritual base now? Or are you still connected to the Jewish community as well? Not that they have to be mutually exclusive.

01:15:22 Schure: Well, I've been very lucky living here because I meditated for several years in the early 2000s with a Buddhist community. But this time I've been meditating with a Jewish community. So the Jewish Community Center here on Amsterdam has—a lot of the teachers are

Rabbis. And when I was younger, when I was a kid and we went to temple, it was meaningless. So this has been a rediscovery for me, too. One of the things that I always do is I have the Seder here. And I finally found the Haggadah that just works for me. And my friends come they are thrilled. They love it. Because it's very—it's about the religious piece as well as the transformational piece. It's all brought together in one place where it's personal growth, it's spiritual growth, it's religious awareness, it's awareness of a force outside of us and inside of us that is so important and so powerful, for the good of all people everywhere, that comes together in this kind of Jewish Buddhism that's very meaningful to me.

01:17:16 Q: It does sound great.

01:17:18 Schure: It's very important, yes.

01:17:24 Q: Okay, let's see what else we haven't covered. So, looking back, what are some of the ways you, as a woman, have changed? Since you were eighteen and leaving home—or seventeen leaving home?

01:17:52 Q: Right.

01:17:53 Q: And I mean that really in all aspects. You said you have a lot more self-confidence, obviously. You had an amazing trajectory, career-wise.

01:18:07 Schure: Yeah. I'm very proud of what I've accomplished in my life. I've met amazing people and worked with amazing people and I—you know, I do feel that I've taken my place in the world. That it's an important place, it's a fulfilling place. I think that when I was seventeen or eighteen and going off to college I had some sense of myself, but now I have much more sense of myself and my personal power, that I can influence and that I use it for the good. I think I didn't have that sense of having power. And I think that confidence leads to power in the best way, and not in the petty politics of power that you can have in a company but as a human being in the world. That I can make a change for the better and I can use that.

So, one of the things I do is I tutor a kid who's now—I guess she's going to be in seventh grade this year. And she's not an easy kid, and she's not a particularly good student. The ways that I interact with her are very different than the ways that I would have interacted with her twenty, thirty, even ten years ago. And that's by giving her more power in ways that I can see that she needs to do that. And so when she refuses, she's had it, she's had it up to here, she doesn't want to work anymore, she starts acting out. Instead of, you know, putting my foot down and saying, "No, we're doing this!" I can either just fool around with her for a few minutes before we go back into it. I let her have the power that she needs to have that her parents don't give her. And it's a gift. It's a gift for both of us. I don't feel like I'm being very articulate about this, but I can use my power to help her take her power.

01:21:30 Q: Yeah, to claim her own, right.

01:21:32 Schure: In an important way.

01:21:33 Q: And in the process she's taking ownership of what she's learning.

01:21:37 Schure: And by not knowing things that—like when they do math now, there are things that she has for homework that I've never heard of. I say, "Okay, let's Google it. I don't know how to do this, let's Google it." And I'll come up with something and she'll come up with something better. And so she knows now. She's learning how to learn, too.

01:22:10 Q: Exactly, yeah.

01:22:11 Schure: And that's so important. So I can be a model for her, and I can share that, and it's good work, I feel good about it.

01:22:22 Q: You should.

01:22:23 Schure: Yeah.

01:22:26 Q: Alright, what about the future. What are some things you hope to do in the future?

01:22:33 Schure: I want to go live in France once I stop working.

01:22:35 Q: I'm amazed you're not there yet. Once you what?

01:22:38 Schure: Once I stop working I want to go live in France and spend a year or two there and read Proust. That's what I'd like to do.

01:22:47 Q: In the original, yeah.

01:22:48 Schure: Yup.

01:22:48 Q: That should take several years [laughs].

01:22:50 Schure: Yes, maybe just a volume or two.

01:22:56 Q: Would you go to Paris? Or south of France?

01:22:58 Schure: I don't know if I'd go to Paris. Maybe Paris. A few years ago I went and did a program in Provence. It was an immersion program, a language program, that was wonderful. And I lived with a family and it was great. So I don't know if it would be that but somewhere where I would definitely be part of what's going on in the community. And then I'd like to come back and take a role in the community here where I am connected. Whether it's part of the JCC [Jewish Community Center] or I often think I'd like to be part of an amateur theatre community and do that. You know, just where I can give back and also be surrounded by creative, interesting, smart people. I don't know what that is yet, but I'll find it.

01:24:11 Q: Great. I just have to say that we raised our kids in Silver Spring Maryland. It was a wonderful school system as well. I had them in the French immersion program and they have thanked me for it in their lives. It's opened so many things to them as well and I always thought another language is compulsory in this family.

01:24:32 Schure: It's a gift.

01:24:35 Q: So I'm thrilled that you've been involved in that as well as just in education in general in so many pioneer issues and topics and projects.

01:24:44 Schure: Yeah. That's so great. How old are your kids now?

01:24:46 Q: Oh, they're not kids, they're adults now [laughs]. In fact, the youngest—I always tell this story, and then I'll get on—because he was in the French immersion program, when the movie *Chocolat*, which was one of my favorites obviously, they were in the process of—they were going to be shooting in two weeks in Flavigny-sur-Ozerian, in the Burgundy region of France. And they saw him in the classroom. They chose him and he had a small part in it. So I got to follow him to France for—whatever—six weeks.

01:25:18 Schure: Oh, how fabulous. That was the Johnny Depp movie, right?

01:25:22 Q: Yeah, that was Johnny Depp, Juliette Binoche, I mean it had everybody, it was wonderful. But anyway—so I'm always for French [laughs]. So you'd travel to France, you'd

hope to come back and be part of a community here. You talk about giving back, but you've always given!

01:25:39 Schure: Yeah. Sometimes I feel like I haven't given enough. But I do. I mean, in my work, it's what I do.

01:25:49 Q: And you're most proud of what? Your whole career? Or the particular part of it that stands out?

01:25:58 Schure: No, not a particular part. I don't think there's one particular part that stands out. I'm proud of my career. I'm proud that I've been in education for my whole career. I wish we could have done more. But, no, there's not one part that sticks out.

01:26:29 Q: So is there anything we haven't covered? I mean I'm not trying to patch in what wasn't covered by whatever Jenna Davis—so I haven't asked a whole lot about Barnard but you've given quite a bit already. But are there other things that you feel haven't been covered in either interview that really define you as a person and your beliefs?

01:26:51 Schure: No, I think that we've gotten it. Yeah.

01:26:58 Q: Any advice you would give to the next generation, or even to yourself if you could go back and either start at Albany or start in Barnard again.

01:27:09 Schure: I think—let’s see if I can articulate this. The piece about the personal power is very important. In a personal way, somebody that I studied with said that, “Insecure is thinking that everybody else has power and you don’t.” And I think that it’s really important to understand how much power you have. And I don’t think I did understand that until maybe the past ten years or so. You know, power is a tricky word and it can be misused easily. I think maybe a better word is influence. You do have a lot of influence. All of us do. Everybody has a lot of influence. And that it’s important for us to get familiar with that and understand—know what you want your influence to be and where you want to use it. And maybe you can’t understand that until you’ve had a certain amount of experience in the world. I don’t really know, but be aware of your influence. Watch how you influence people. Just see it, because I think there are many times in my life when I did have a lot of influence and I didn’t realize how much influence I had. And had I known, I might have felt differently and I might have acted differently. And now that I know, I think I use it more carefully. But just know that you do have an influence. And the more you’re aware of it, I think the more wisely you’ll use it. Yeah. That would be—that’s a very important thing.

01:29:38 Q: Let me go back, something I meant to ask earlier. A little bit out of sequence here, but that doesn’t matter. So when you first started teaching it was a very different—late ‘70s, right?

01:29:51 Schure: Early ‘70s.

01:29:51 Q: Early '70s, right out of college. And you now are preparing materials for teachers to be better teachers over a whole facet of different areas. What do you think—what would you be able to say has, maybe, the major change between the students you maybe had out in Berkeley or California in the '70s, and those you're addressing now through education?

01:30:19 Schure: That's a very hard one because I'm not in the classroom now.

01:30:26 Q: Well, yeah. Right.

01:30:27 Schure: And I know kids are very different. They're just very different.

01:30:40 Q: Maybe from the perspective of a teacher. How do you think the teachers are different? I know they're under a lot more pressure than they were in those days.

01:30:51 Schure: They're under a ton more pressure. I think that it's not as much fun to be a teacher now. They don't have as much autonomy. They really feel this, you know, need to teach to the test. If their kids don't do well they're penalized. They're evaluated badly. It's really a shame because—I mean of course I taught in Brookline where you were congratulated for approaching the administration and saying, "I don't want to teach social studies that way, I'd rather teach it this way." And they did have to approve, but they often did. Now—I mean I don't know how it is in Brookline now. It's probably better than most places. But that's just unthinkable. You know, the kids are taking the test at the end of the year and they have to do this, this, and this. I just think the pressures are enormous to not just—I think for kids to

conform, too, in a way that they didn't before. And yet I see kids as being less conforming. It's funny. I don't know. I didn't bring up my own kids so I don't know how that is.

But one of my neighbors that I had dinner with the other night, her son is a senior in college and she said that they don't have boyfriends the way we used to have boyfriends. That everybody is single now. And she has a son and he sort of feels badly because he'd like to have a girlfriend and nobody—none of the girls want to have a boyfriend. And that they're—it's all about what they're going to be and what they're going to accomplish, and what they're going to do. So it's very different in that way. I don't know. I have no words of advice for that. I don't know. I think it's just, "Be aware of yourself and your influence, and be careful." Yeah.

01:33:46 Q: Listen, I very much enjoyed speaking with you and if there anything else you want to add before we turn of the camera, you're most welcome.

01:33:56 Schure: No, I don't think so. I think we've covered it.

01:33:59 Q: A great interview. I appreciate it so much, and thank you.

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