RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL ALLMAN

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Michael Perchiacca: This begins an interview with Mr. Paul Allman on May 11, 2007, with Michael Perchiacca, Matt Bonasia and Sandra Stewart Holyoak in New Brunswick, New Jersey. For the record, Mr. Allman, when and where were you born?

Paul Allman: Washington, DC, June 23, 1945.

MP: Can you tell us a little bit about your parents' heritage, such as where they were born, where they were from?

PA: My father's side of the family was in Washington, DC, from the 1850s. … His grandfather had come over from Ireland in 1851, 1852, from County Kerry, as did his grandmother. … His father was born in Washington, DC, … in the late 1850s and he married a woman that was from Ireland also. So, my father's side of the family was all Irish. My mother's side of the family, we kind of lose track of it in Upstate New York in the late eighteenth century. It goes back to maybe … 1780, 1785, and we lost track of it, but … she's a direct descendant. Her parents, her mother was from Philadelphia, her father was still from Upstate New York. So, my father's side of the family was Irish Catholic, my mother's side of the family was mostly English Protestant.

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: Can you tell me what your father's grandparents did in Washington, DC? Usually, we hear about people immigrating to New York or Philadelphia, but this is quite interesting.

PA: Yes, yes. Washington's a real, you know, itinerant city. It's strange to find people that have been there a long time. They were dairy farmers. They had a dairy farm in the city, on Capitol Hill. We have some pictures of my grandfather delivering milk from Allman Dairy in a horse-drawn cart. So, there's a little bit of a funny story; finally, the Capitol Hill Police told him he couldn't have his cows graze on the Capitol lawn anymore. … Supposedly, one of my cousins has the citation where they wrote him up and he complained bitterly about how this was surely the end of American politics, when these supposed representatives of the people could no longer step in cow patties on the way to work and have to get their [shoes dirty], you know, that he had to move his cows for these politicians. So, he moved the cows across the Anacostia River, into Anacostia, and he had to ferry the milk back to Capitol Hill.

SH: That is great. Your mother grew up in …

PA: My mother grew up in DC also. Both my parents were born in DC. Her parents, as I'd mentioned, … her mother was from Philly; well, not Philly. She was actually from Camden, but she worked in Philly … and she moved to Washington in 1905, or somewhere around there. … Her future husband moved to DC about the same time, from Upstate New York. … He had a graduate degree in agriculture from Cornell and he went to work for the Department of Agriculture. So, both my parents were born in DC.

SH: It is unique that you have the government and the agrarian sides of the family.

PA: Right, yes.

SH: Tell us about growing up in DC. What are your earliest memories?

PA: Well, both my parents were schoolteachers. They went to Wilson Teachers College. At that time, even [in] DC, the college, for DC, was segregated. Wilson Teachers College was white and the teachers' college for blacks was; I forget the name of it. It may have been Spelman, … like the college, but, anyway, they both went to college at DC Teachers College, Wilson Teachers College, and got married and went to work for DC public schools. So, one of my earliest memories is, when I was about to go off to kindergarten, I had to meet the principal and the teacher. All of these teachers had gone to Wilson Teachers College with my parents, so, I got a little bit of special treatment. It didn't keep me from being terrified. … I remember that the separation anxiety was terrible, first time I had to go away to school. I mean, it was right up the hill, but, still, Mom leaving me there, as a five-year-old …

SH: Which part of DC did you grow up in?

PA: Southeast.

SH: Do you remember the street?

PA: Yes. It's hard to believe, but we moved into this house in 1950, … right off of 30th and Pennsylvania. It was Nash Place and it was a dirt road. Washington was still a very small town, in that it had grown a lot during World War II, but we were thirty blocks from the Capitol and we lived on a dirt road.

SH: Had your father served in the military?

PA: Yes. He was in World War II. My parents had gotten married, I believe, in '38 or '39, and they were on their honeymoon, their second honeymoon; … since they were schoolteachers, they had the summer off, so, they had their honeymoon, and then, they went to Europe in '39 and, you know, Hitler was about to march into France and there was a real panic and a lot of Americans were trapped. … My parents were among them. They were caught in Paris. Coincidentally my wife's parents were also caught in Paris at the same time The American authorities were… separating the men from the wives and the children and doing everything they could to get people on ships and get them back to the States, but, as soon as my father got back, he went into the Navy.

SH: Did they discuss any specific stories about being trapped in France and trying to get out?

PA: Just that it was really a fun adventure, in retrospect. … People were incredibly nonchalant about the Nazis at that point, because they were young and there was plenty of champagne. … Every day, they were told they had to show up at the embassy or the consulate, or I guess it was the embassy, they were in Paris, and they were told to show up to see if there was a place for them on the ships to go back. … When they'd show up, and then, they'd be told, "No, we can't get you on a ship today," so, it was back to the champagne in the café. … It sounded like a good time, [laughter] but, fortunately, they were not separated and they came back on the same ship. I forget what ship it was, but the men and the women on the ship were segregated, because they

were, you know, just piled into every available compartment, like dormitories, and so, you could see your wife or your girlfriend up on the main deck, but you couldn't sleep with them. So, they got back okay, and then, I don't know exactly [how he enlisted]. You know, they were drafting everybody at the time. … I guess, he must have volunteered, because I don't know whether the Navy was drafting, and they sent him to … officers' training at Harvard at that point. I mean, a lot of the universities were put into service to be military [installations]. The Navy, there was a Navy ROTC department at Harvard, so, … he became a "ninety-day-wonder," as they called them, at Harvard, and then, he was put on a ship, the [USS] *Chiwawa* [(A-68)], an oiler, out of Norfolk.

SH: Did your mother save any of the letters or tell you any of the stories about it?

PA: You know, I don't [know]. There were a few letters, but I remember seeing one or two of them. … My father never talked much about the Navy, and I think I found out, later, why. He was on an oiler and he said they were running convoys. They'd go down to the Caribbean, or to Venezuela or Aruba, and pick up oil, come up, and then, get an escort and go over to Europe. … You know, there was a lot of ships being blown up all around them and it was terribly nerve-wracking. … You know, they would have a destroyer escort, sometimes, or the destroyer escort would run off to fight a battle with, you know, the combatants, the battleships or the cruisers or whatever, and, sometimes, they were unattended. … They'd be cruising along and they'd see their sister ships blowing up in the middle of the ocean around them, from the U-boats. … You know, it was really pretty terrible, when he would talk about it, because I, later, ended up in the Navy, under similar circumstances, without the U-boats of course, and so, I talked to him about it and he was really reticent. He would talk about how terrifying it was to see people who you knew, on ships next to you, being blown out of the water, because they were carrying fuel. … When they got hit, it went, and they came back and he checked into Bethesda Naval Hospital and, apparently, it was battle fatigue or shellshock or whatever. … He was there for awhile, and then, he was transferred off of the ship, and we do have some records of that. He was transferred off of the ship and he was not returned to the ship. … We've seen the ship's logs, as a matter-of-fact. My brother kind of tracked this down, because we know what ship he was on and we know some of the people that he served with and, you know, they were very kind in those days. They didn't say that Leo Allman had cracked up, or anything. They just say [that] he'd been transferred to the Bethesda Naval Hospital and that was it, but, in talking to my mother, later, she intimated that he was just starting to become really withdrawn. … It was clear that he was becoming not himself, battle fatigue, or I don't know what they called it at that time.

SH: I think that was the term that they used then.

PA: Yes, battle fatigue, and so, rather than sending him back to the ship, and this was in '44, … he had been a history major and a teacher, and they put him to work. For the last six or seven months before he got discharged, he was writing a history of the Washington Navy Yard, because he'd grown up on Capitol Hill and a lot of his uncles and relatives had worked [there]. The Washington Navy Yard is right on Capitol Hill and, at that time, it was a naval gun factory, from World War I [on], and so, his last six or seven months, he was writing a history of the Washington Navy Yard.

SH: You said he enlisted when they got back from Europe. Was this prior to Pearl Harbor?

PA: No, he would …

SH: That was December of 1941.

PA: Right. So, you know, I think they might have just gone back to their teaching positions, but, then, it must have been Pearl Harbor that prompted him to enlist. I don't know exactly. You know, I've got his paperwork. I never looked, but his enlistment …

SH: I was just curious if his having been in Europe and being quite nonchalant about the enemy at that stage of the game prompted him, too, perhaps, in coming back, and the conditions.

PA: … I don't think so. I think he went in under the conditions that most people did, "You're going to get drafted, so, what are you going to do about it?" [laughter]

SH: Make your choice now.

PA: Yes, so, I'm pretty sure he went in after the declaration of war.

SH: It is interesting, because we try to document how people with battle fatigue were treated or attended to back then, and how that has changed over the years.

PA: He was treated pretty well, I mean, you know, from what I can tell. I mean, again, there's very little in the record, and I think that's very kind, that there's nothing clinical or negative, other than [that] he was transferred to the hospital, and why would anybody be transferred from an oiler, when the war's still going on, to a hospital? He'd never been wounded or anything. …

SH: That probably had a lot to do with his reticence to talk about it as well.

PA: Right, yes, I think so. He really never did talk about it much and, when he did, he talked about … his sister ships around him blowing up in the middle of the night, you know. Those U-boats were an ever-present fear, because they knew they were out there. … Yes, he didn't talk much more about it than that. I have a number of pictures taken on his ship, but the pictures themselves don't tell you much. They're pictures in the wardroom and pictures of his fellow officers and that type of thing.

SH: Did the military still pay disability for him after the war?

PA: No, no. It was just a full honorable discharge, no disability. I think, because I have a number of siblings and I was the one that ended up with his military records, … I'm sure it would be in there, if there was any kind of disability. So, I'm fairly sure there wasn't.

SH: Many men did not apply for it, because they did not want that attached to it as well.

PA: Right, yes, and he didn't have any repercussions, that I know of. He never spoke [of], nor did my mother ever talk about, nightmares or trouble sleeping or any nervous disorders or anything, so, whatever it was that transferred him from the ship to the hospital must have been taken care of.

SH: You were born in 1945, a year after he was discharged.

PA: I was born on June 23rd of '45, yes. You know, … I think his discharge date was after that, or it was about the same time, because I think he started teaching again in the school year that would have been '45-'46. Yes, so, his discharge must have been very close to my arrival on the scene.

SH: You are the oldest.

PA: No. I have an older brother who was born in November of '42, so, soon after, you know, my father probably went on active duty early in '42, and my brother was born in November of '42.

SH: Has your brother ever talked to you about anything that he remembers?

PA: You know, my brother … found some stuff on the Internet about the ship that my father was on, the *Chiwawa* was the name of it, the AO something, and the ship was having a reunion, and so, my brother went to it. …

SH: Really?

PA: Yes. It was someplace in Pennsylvania and, you know, he was pretty excited about it, but he really didn't get very much out of it. … None of the officers were still alive and a few of the enlisted men remembered him, but he said he really didn't get any information. You know, there was a lot of information about the ship and the number of runs they made in the North Atlantic and, you know, they just kept those ships running. I mean, … they just went back and forth, as they had to, but he really didn't find out a lot of information. … I'm sure he would have shared it, because he, too, was really curious about whether or how my father had exhibited the battle fatigue or whatever, and then, he didn't get any information about that at all.

SH: Did your mother talk about what it was like to be in Washington during the war? This is unique for us. We have never talked to anyone who was in Washington, other than working for the War Department or Agriculture or some other agency.

PA: Yes. You know, I think she stayed in DC. She didn't move. A lot of wives would have moved to where the home port of the ship was. … Really, it's a good thing she didn't, because the ship was never in home port. She stayed in DC and, at that point, she had a small son, so, she wasn't working, but she had a real support group and she loved Washington. Both my parents loved Washington. I think Washington was a great place to grow up in the '20s and '30s. It really was a neat town. It's a beautiful city. Obviously, it changed a lot in the latter part of the century, but she had a huge support group, because my father was from a really big family and

she fit in really well with them. … She hadn't been disowned by her own family, but there was a lot of discomfort on her mother's part about her marrying a Catholic. I mean, her mother really kind of thought Catholics had tails under their coats. [laughter] I mean, you know, I don't know whether her mother had ever met a Catholic, frankly. They were real WASP-y … on my mother's side of the family, but my mother fit in very well with my father's side of the family and he had ten siblings and they were all right there on Capitol Hill. So, my mother's social group was very comforting and, you know, she had a new son and, you know, I think she was pretty comfortable, except she missed her husband. … When the ship would come [home], you know, the Navy, obviously, was very secretive about ships' schedules and where the ships would be showing up, but, you know, things would [get out]. Somehow, they'd communicate if the ship was going to be in somewhere, and so, they'd hop on a train and, you know, sometimes, it would go into New York or, sometimes, it would go into Norfolk. Those are really the only two places that she could get to easily by train. So, she'd hop on a train and, you know, they'd spend as much time as they could together, while the ship was in port. I guess they were in the Boston Navy Yard for an overhaul or some minor repairs, so, they got to spend some time there. That's the kind of thing she talked about. …

SH: She did not talk about rationing.

PA: No, she didn't. I never remember any discussions of that, other than [that] there was rationing, but, other than that, there was no real discussions.

SH: Her experience was not so much as a Navy wife as it was just as a member of the community that was staying there in Washington.

PA: Correct, yes.

SH: It was established. It was not the transient community that we think of when we think of Washington.

PA: Right, yes.

SH: What are your earliest memories of growing up in Washington?

PA: … Other than being traumatized by having to go to school? [laughter]

SH: That was where we left off.

PA: Right. My memories are good memories of school. I went to Catholic school. I went to public school to start with and, believe it or not, the schools were still segregated. I still have a hard time figuring, you know, [that] I went to a segregated school in the capital of the United States.

SH: Can you talk about that? Was that just the way it was?

PA: … I wasn't aware of it. I mean, they said, "You're going to that school," and I was this big, so, I said, "Okay, I'll go to that school," and the fact that there weren't any black people in the school; you know, I didn't know any black people anyway. Washington was very, very segregated, I mean by neighborhood. So, I didn't see black people, and so, … as a small child, it didn't enter my consciousness at all. … Then, after kindergarten, because the Catholic schools didn't have kindergarten, at first grade, then, I went to Catholic school, first through eighth, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, which was full of my cousins. So, I was surrounded, because my father had these ten siblings and quite a few of them had large families in our neighborhood. So, at one time, there were something like eighteen of us in the elementary school. It was really kind of fun. [laughter]

SH: They changed the name of the school.

PA: Well, my grandmother really got what she wanted. They had this thing; on … the first Friday of every month, they'd troop everybody from the school over to the church to go to Mass, and [it was for] something like you were never going to spend any time in purgatory. I forget. I'm not a observant Catholic, but there was a lot of weird stuff they taught us in those days. You get all these indulgences built up and, … if you went to first Friday, every first Friday of the month for so long, then, you'd never spend any time in purgatory. … So, then, they'd troop everybody back, and you couldn't eat before you went to Mass, because you couldn't eat, you had to fast, before you went to Communion. So, then, they'd troop everybody back to the school to eat and my grandmother said, "No, all of the Allman kids are going to file out and they're coming over to my house," because she lived near the church, and the nun said, "Okay, okay, Grandma," and they'd let us. You know, the rest of the school's marching back and we'd all file out and go to Grandma's house, which was kind of cool, and she really treated us well. This was my Catholic grandma, obviously. My Protestant grandmother still didn't acknowledge "the Papists." …

SH: Did that change?

PA: No, no. She was hard and cold, she really was, until the day she died. My mother's dead, so, I can say that now. I wouldn't have said it to my mother, but my siblings all agree.

SH: That is too bad.

PA: Yes, well, she was raised in a certain culture and had certain prejudices and she just never let them go, and the fact that my mother had seven children just killed her. I mean, you know, not only did she marry a Catholic, but she acted like a Catholic. [laughter] …

SH: Did your mother become a Catholic?

PA: Yes, she did, yes, but that was a cool thing about that school; there were so many cousins, and the neighborhood … was mostly Irish and Italian, you know, from second and third generation Irish and Italian immigrants. I mean, … all of the Catholics were, anyway. … On our block and in our neighborhood, not everybody was Catholic. I mean, it wasn't like a Catholic ghetto or anything. There were a lot of Protestants and, you know, we played with a lot

of other kids, but, you know, a lot of our social life was centered around the school, because those were our schoolmates. … At that time, there were so many kids being born and … you didn't need too many other friends, other than your cousins and a couple of other people in your school. …

SH: Had many of your father's siblings gone to war as well?

PA: At least two of them. One of them, my Uncle Jack, actually stayed over there for awhile and came home with a war bride, a German woman, my Aunt (Herta?). … One of my uncles was a doctor and he had been drafted, and so, he was in the Medical Corps. He was in the Navy, also. Another uncle had also been in the Navy. So, yes, they were. I don't know, the Navy was the service of choice for that family, for some reason. I don't know. Yes, so, I never recall, really, them all sitting around talking about their war experiences, and I never saw any of them with uniforms [on] or none of them belonged to the VFW. … It wasn't a part of their lives that they carried forward with them into the post-war period.

SH: Other than going to school as a unit with your family, your extended family, were there other organizations that you belonged to as a young boy? What did you do for fun, like after school?

PA: Sports. … The CYO was a big deal. The Catholic Youth Organization had all the sports teams and, at that time, there were so many kids, and there were so many Catholic kids, in Washington that the CYO sports teams really played the city championships. … When I was in the eighth grade, this was 130-pound football, we actually played in Griffith Stadium, where the Washington Redskins played, and we played at night, under the lights, [laughter] when we were thirteen. You know, most of the kids were twelve … and thirteen years old. It was really kind of cool. It was a real rainy night, you know, you're all muddy and, after that, our game, the city championship game was played. … The high school city championship game, oddly enough, also was [where] the best public school would play the best Catholic school, and there's an interesting story about that. My senior year in high school, the city championship game, Griffith Stadium had been torn down and … the Redskins and Washington Senators had moved to RFK Stadium. [Editor's Note: The District of Columbia Stadium opened in October 1961 and was renamed to honor Robert F. Kennedy in January 1969.] That's where the city championship game was played and the quarterback for the winning team was a guy named Jimmy Yore, who ended up at Rutgers and was the star quarterback for the 150-pound Rutgers football team, and my roommate for one year. So, it was that year where there was a terrible riot at the stadium, and the game's never been played again since. They used to call them race riots. It was racially driven and it was … kind of the beginning of the really bad times in DC, as far as race relations, because this was in '62, because I graduated from high school in '63, so, it was November. The game was always played on Thanksgiving morning and it was a big deal. I mean, everybody would go, because the Catholic schools would all go because it was the Catholic team, and the public schools, at least the public school that was in it, would all go. … There'd never been trouble before and it was just terrible. I mean, people's windows were broken in the parking lot and some people were very badly injured in fights and, yes, it was a terrible, terrible event.

SH: Was the city school black?

PA: Yes. Well, DC public schools were about ninety-eight or ninety-five percent black, yes. Yes, it's a terrible story about, you know, … the legacy of slavery. I mean, you know, we had segregation for so long and, finally, in '54, when the schools did integrate--just, you know, you think of segregation, you think of Mississippi and Alabama; wrong, Washington, DC, the nation's capital--and, when they integrated, that was the start of "white flight" out of the city of Washington, and the "white flight" continued for twenty years. … It was really accelerated when the Martin Luther King riots happened. … They burned down really big chunks of the city. [Editor's Note: Mr. Allman is referring to riots that occurred in the wake of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination on April 4, 1968.]

SH: Were you still in DC then?

PA: I was in the Navy. I was off on a ship, but I came back. Our ship pulled in and there was still smoke rising from the ashes when I drove back up from Norfolk. Yes, it was bad times.

SH: When you went on to high school, which high school did you go to?

PA: I went to Gonzaga, Gonzaga College High School, which is a Jesuit school in downtown Washington, right on North Capital Street, kind of right in the shadow of the Capitol.

SH: Were you recruited for the different schools? There is more than one Catholic high school, obviously, that you could have gone to.

PA: Right. Recruited, as in?

SH: Because you were an athlete.

PA: No, no. …

SH: Why did you pick Gonzaga?

PA: Well, my father had gone there and, … academically, it was a very good school. It was a Jesuit school and there were two Jesuit schools, Georgetown Prep and Gonzaga. … You know, it was a very good academic school, and so, not only had my father gone there, my brother had gone there and a lot of uncles had gone there, … but it was also instrumental in getting into a good college, because it was a very good school.

SH: When did you know you wanted to go to college? Your parents had gone to teacher's college. Was it just assumed that you would go to college?

PA: You know, I don't ever remember thinking otherwise, … but my brother didn't. My brother, the one who was two-and-a-half years older than I am, he went right into the Marine Corps. I don't think he liked school and he'd had a tough time at Gonzaga. He'd been on academic probation occasionally when he was there. He went right from high school into the Marine Corps, spent four years in the Marine Corps.

SH: For yourself, what were the activities that you were involved in in high school?

PA: Well, you know, I'll be frank; it was mostly chasing girls and drinking beer.

SH: In high school.

PA: Yes.

Matthew Bonasia: Shocking. [laughter]

PA: Yes. [laughter] I don't know. I was a pretty good student. I probably should have done better than I did, but I did pretty well, but we really did spend a lot of time thinking about having a good time on the weekends.

SH: Even living with that much family close by.

PA: Yes.

SH: That is a deterrent, too.

PA: Well, underage drinking was just rampant. I mean, it really was. I'm not so sure it still isn't, but, you know, people started drinking beer when they were fourteen and fifteen and it wasn't very difficult to get into bars or find somebody [old enough], you know, find a way to buy beer. So, those were activities. [laughter] Yes, … I wasn't big enough to continue athletics. I'm the same size now as when I was thirteen. I just stopped growing. [laughter] So, I was a pretty big football player in seventh and eighth grade, but, high school, it just wouldn't have worked, and basketball, yes. So, athletics just kind of went by the wayside until I became older. The same was true in college. I just didn't have the interest.

SH: Did the family travel at all when you were young? You have a big family.

PA: Right. It was difficult. I don't remember too much traveling. You know, we'd go to the beach and the beaches, at that time, were very accessible. They were on the Chesapeake Bay. Finally, they built a bridge across the Chesapeake Bay and you could go to Ocean City, but, you know, we'd go to the beach. We'd make day trips. I remember going up to Gettysburg a lot. My father was a real history buff and that was always fun, and we'd take … a load of cars and cousins and would play war, you know. Some guys would be the Union and some guys would be the Confederacy and you'd throw rocks at each other, … you know, Devil's Den, [an area of the battlefield], and all that stuff. … That's why I love that book *Killer Angels*, yes, because that's where we used to play, [laughter] because Gettysburg's not that far from Washington. It's very accessible. So, we'd make day trips like that, and … there was so much to do in Washington, I mean, you know, the museums and the parks.

SH: Did you avail yourself of those?

PA: Oh, yes, yes, and then, you know, it wasn't long before we were old enough to [go out on our own]. My parents never hesitated to let us travel on our own on the streetcar. They had a good streetcar system, which they have ripped up, and we could hop on the street [car]. We'd go to night games at Griffith Stadium on the streetcar when we were really pretty small kids. … I had three brothers and three sisters, so, it was difficult to travel as a family. Yes, that's something about my father, too. He didn't want to travel. He never flew in an airplane and he really didn't [want to travel]. He wasn't … an adventurous traveler and that may have had to do with his war experiences. I remember him saying something to the effect that, "You know, I was on a plane once in the Navy and that was enough," and, you know, he'd been to Europe a couple of times, that was enough. … So, he didn't like to travel. … As we found out after my father's death, my mother really liked to travel, but she was not a complainer and I'm sure she had the desire to travel before my father died, but she never said anything about it. …

SH: With seven children, did your mother continue to teach?

PA: … She stayed home, and she stayed home until the youngest started school, and then, when the youngest started kindergarten, then, she went back [to] teaching full-time and she taught until she was well into her seventies. She was a reading teacher in DC public schools. She worked in some terrible neighborhoods, and the house we were raised in, the neighborhood became pretty dangerous. The neighborhood of contiguous blocks were pretty nice houses, but it was in Southeast Washington, where it was surrounded by … some terrible drug problems and gang killings. … We couldn't talk her out of leaving the neighborhood or leaving the schools she taught in.

SH: That is great, very interesting.

PA: … After my father died, she just stayed there. She lived in the house by herself. Well, she had a dog, but, yes, we were really kind of worried about her, for a lot of reasons. …

SH: Had the rest of the family moved out of the area?

PA: Yes. A couple of my siblings subsequently moved back to Capitol Hill, but Capitol Hill was not a very safe area either, beyond about Eighth or Ninth Street, and it's just kind of becoming gentrified now.

SH: Why Rutgers?

PA: Well, I had very good reasons. [laughter] When I graduated from Gonzaga, since it was a Jesuit school, unless you were really in academic trouble, you automatically could go to Georgetown and get a half scholarship. … So, at this point, I had a lot of siblings and my father said, "Well, I hope you enjoy Georgetown," and, at that point, my mother wasn't working. So, you know, six kids, because my brother had gone in the Marine Corps, six kids and one salary from DC public schools, they didn't have a lot of money. We never considered ourselves poor, but, you know, we wore a lot of hand-me-downs and didn't worry about it. … "Well," I said, "Dad, you know, I can't live with these kids anymore, especially the sisters. C'mon, I've got to get out of here," and he said, "I don't know what you're going to do, because I'm only going to

pay for you to be a day student at Georgetown. … That's the money I'll put up. You want to do something else, it's fine with me." They were very open to me doing anything I wanted to. … You know, they never tried to sway me in any way other than, "Look, I can get you a good education for this amount of money at Georgetown," and I said, "Well, just give me the money then. I'll figure it out," and so, I started doing the numbers and I could afford to go to either William and Mary or to Rutgers, because they were such a good deal. I mean, they were a real value for the dollar, and so, those are the only two places I applied to, and it is really difficult to get into William and Mary from Washington, DC, because … it's a state school, also. You have to take a certain number of state students and a lot of them come from the DC area, Northern Virginia. So, you know, demographically, they don't need any more people from DC or close in Maryland. So, I didn't get into William and Mary and I got into Rutgers. …

SH: Was it just the cost of tuition?

PA: It was the cost, you know. I had to go to a public school, because the private schools were too expensive. … I wanted to go to a good school and Rutgers and William and Mary were the two best schools I could get into with what I thought I could [afford], you know, given the loans and Pell Grants and working, what I could afford to pay. …

SH: Had you had jobs after school or during summers?

PA: Yes, yes.

SH: What had some of your jobs been?

PA: You don't want to know. They were all this really menial stuff, I mean, you know, sweeping floors. My best job ever was with the Teamsters, and somebody here at Rutgers got me a job up at the *Anheuser-Busch* brewery in Newark. That was my best summer job. That was my most exalted job, was working in a brewery. [laughter] … I really never had much luck nailing anything other than manual labor, you know, either as a high student or as a college student, although, while at Rutgers, I worked in the library. … The University gave me [that job], you know. I'd applied for financial aid and I got some loans and they gave me a job and the job was in the library, but, you know, the University jobs didn't pay very well. I mean, I started looking right away, [laughter] and I got a job at the, I don't know whether it's still here, it was the American Hungarian Studies Foundation. Is that still around? Yes, I worked for them and I worked in the sheet metal factory across the bridge. I could walk to it. … I lost a lot of blood in that place. Sheet metal is a terrible thing to work with. You know, you're always slicing your fingers up.

SH: When you first came to Rutgers, was it the first day you came to school or did you visit ahead of time?

PA: Nope, I'd never seen the place.

SH: Did your family drive you up or did you come on the train?

PA: No, they did, and that was the only time they saw the place. [laughter] Yes, they drove me up, and I don't know what they did with the rest of the kids, because the rest of the kids, I don't know, they might have driven back the same day. I don't know. I think they might have. They drove me up, dropped me off at Livingston [Hall] and … that was great. … I was on the third floor, facing the river, [the] upriver side of Livingston, and I went in there and immediately hit it off with the guys, and I had nothing. I didn't know what Northerners were like or people from Jersey. … I knew I was going to freeze to death up here, [laughter] but [I] met some lifelong friends. I mean, a guy that I'm with here this weekend, Chuck Little, who's being interviewed, too, Chuck was on that dorm floor. Jimmy Yore, the guy that was the quarterback for the 150-[pound football] team and … had started the race riot. He didn't start it, but he always said he did, because he was the quarterback and he threw the winning touchdown right at the end and, boom, the stands exploded, but he was on that floor. Alan Brown, from Brown's Bakery on Weequahic Avenue in Newark, who was my roommate my sophomore year; there was just a great bunch of guys on that floor. It was just real luck. So, I had a ball. It was just really neat, you know, very fond memories.

SH: Was chapel still mandatory?

PA: Yes.

SH: And ROTC?

PA: You know, I think it was, but, then, they let you quit really quickly. … You know, when I showed, I was signed up for Air Force ROTC, but I got out of it really fast. … So, it must not have been mandatory. No, it couldn't have been mandatory, although I was signed up for it. I don't know quite how [that happened]. I just wasn't interested in it at all.

SH: This is the fall of 1963.

PA: That's correct.

SH: At that point, did you know what you were going to study?

PA: I was signed up to be a history major, but I was really interested in English and I teetered back and forth, because we didn't have to declare a major, I guess, until the end of your sophomore year. … I really liked English and I liked writing and I wasn't really sure, and still, kind of, I wanted to get a teaching certificate and I couldn't get a teaching certificate and take all the English courses that I wanted to and still be a history major and try to get enough English courses, in case I wanted to go to graduate school in English. … So, I dropped out of the teaching certificate program to take more English courses. … You know, I was headed towards history from the beginning.

SH: At that time, here on campus, there were only men, of course, but there were women across town, not too far. How long did that take?

PA: As soon as we got our first case of beer, the next stop was Douglass, the first day. [laughter] I mean, yes, that wasn't long at all.

SH: Were there any formal introductions, such as mixers or anything like that?

PA: Yes, there were.

SH: Between the two schools.

PA: Yes, and I guess they had dances at the Ledge. … I remember, "the Coop," is it, what they called it? I remember one of the mixers over there and I found a girlfriend really quick and she was great. She was from Bergen, or North Bergen, I guess it's called.

[TAPE PAUSED]

MP: This continues an interview with Mr. Paul Allman on May 11, 2007, with Michael Perciacca, Matt Bonasia and Sandra Stewart Holyoak in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

SH: We were just talking about your first few days up here. Chapel was mandatory. What did they do at chapel at that point, in 1963? Did you try to get an exemption because you were Catholic, to go to St. Peter's, or did you go right on to Kirkpatrick?

PA: You know, I didn't know that people could ask for an exemption. People may have, but, you know, it didn't dawn on me to do so. … My wife and I were just walking by Kirkpatrick Chapel … and I was explaining to her that we used to have to go and I kind of enjoyed it. … You know, being a Catholic, with all the bells and whistles and smoke and hocus pocus, [laughter] you know, this didn't seem like religion anyway. I mean, it was more like, "Let's see, I'm going to have a really nice conversation," yes. So, I didn't think of trying to get out of it. …

SH: Was there an initiation for freshmen still at that point?

PA: Initiation, as in hazing? …

SH: I think that was more for the fraternities, but was there anything across the board for all students?

[TAPE PAUSED]

PA: The wearing of the dink was still required, [laughter] and my friend, Chuck Little, and I were in front of Livingston with our dinks on. We had gone through an initiation where, during that first week, they taught you a lot of the school songs, especially those that would be, you know, football cheers and things. … We were standing on the sidewalk there and this big bus pulled up and we were abducted by the football team, on their way to the Heights, and we had to sing to them all the way up to the Heights, and then, they just kicked us out and we didn't even know where we were. [laughter] … I don't think we'd been to the Heights yet. … Yes, so, there was still a form of initiation and, you know, that's pretty mild hazing. … We felt pretty foolish,

but, you know, we survived. I thought that was fun, you know, the songs and all that, because, you know, as I said, … football season was a great time of year here and we would always go to the games, the away games, also, you know, and it was great that we all knew all the songs and all the cheers. … Even if the team wasn't winning, it was still a lot of fun.

SH: Before the interview started, you talked about the teams that Rutgers played back then.

PA: Well, I just think it was, you know, some wonderful rivalries. I mean, the Princeton game, every year, was just great. I mean, everybody would go and there'd be these huge picnics, because it was always played at Palmer Stadium, because Rutgers Stadium was not big enough, you know. I understand it's been expanded now, but because it was such a popular game, it just couldn't be played here, but nobody here cared, because it was such a fun time to go down there. … The fall weather's so nice everywhere and I think a lot of us, … we were very sorry that Rutgers decided to go "big time." When they had a losing record for so many years in a row, it didn't seem like it was going to work, [laughter] but we really enjoyed it when they were playing the other small schools, because there were such good rivalries. … You know, the campuses were always welcoming, and so, yes, I really thought that was a bad idea, to pretend we were a big university when we were just Rutgers College, weren't we? At that time, we were, but I guess, you know, it was part of the evolution of the University, which is still evolving, I understand.

SH: It is. I can testify to that. Can you tell us then a little bit about some of the activities that you got involved in as a freshman? You talked about being in Air Force ROTC. How long did that last?

PA: You know, I don't think it lasted very long. …

SH: A year or a semester?

PA: No, maybe a week. [laughter] …

SH: That is a little short.

PA: Yes. It must not have been mandatory, because I think I went to one class … and heard about what this was going to be like for the next four years and I just didn't think it was for me. So, I guess I told them I didn't want to do it and they didn't throw me out or anything, so, I guess it was okay that I didn't want to do it. … I was not in it more than a week or so.

SH: What about the draft?

PA: … Did they have a draft in '63? I don't know when they even started the draft. I don't think so.

MB: I do not think they drafted until 1965-1966.

PA: Because I don't remember being the least bit concerned about the draft.

MB: I do not think they really started until LBJ escalated the ground troops in Vietnam.

PA: Yes, '65.

MB: 1965, going into 1966.

PA: Yes, it wasn't a concern. I was interested in ROTC just because of the money. I mean, I was really strapped for money, and then, I found that you didn't get paid for the first two years. I said, "This just didn't make sense." Had they paid, I might have done it, because I really had to work a lot of part-time jobs, and including selling sandwiches, cake, milk and ice cream, in the halls of the dorms. I don't know whether they allow people to do that anymore.

SH: Were you making your own sandwiches and things?

PA: No, it was a concession and … a lot of guys used to do it. There was a guy who had organized it and the sandwiches and everything came from a sub shop right off of Easton Avenue, near; oh, what is that cross …

SH: Somerset and Hamilton?

PA: Yes, I think so, yes, right around there, and so, you'd go and you'd get these boxes and you'd throw the dorm door open and [say], "Sandwiches, cake, milk and ice cream," and you'd go from floor to floor, and then, you'd get a cut of the take and, anyway, a part-time job, anything to make it through. [laughter]

SH: Did you go home often, back to DC?

PA: Not very. No, not really, and we always hitchhiked. In those days, I never took the bus or the train. We always hitchhiked and, you know, always hitchhiked in a coat and tie. People picked you up and it was really easy, hitchhiking in those days.

SH: Did you wear a coat and tie to class here at Rutgers?

PA: No.

SH: Were there any occasions when you did need to be more formally dressed?

PA: In the fraternity. I joined the fraternity and we ate in coat and tie every night.

SH: When did you join the fraternity, your sophomore year?

PA: Well, you could be a pledge, and you couldn't get near a fraternity your freshman first semester, but you could start to go to fraternities … your second semester freshman year. So, then, you could pledge and I guess you'd be made a brother or member … right at the end of your freshman year.

SH: Did you go to different fraternities or did you know where you were going?

PA: No, they had; I forget what they called it. …

MP: Rush?

PA: Rush, yes, right, and you just go … up and down the streets and have a beer. …

MB: They are dry out here.

PA: Are they?

MB: Yes. One of the frats got busted a couple of years ago.

SH: How long did it take you to make up your mind where you wanted to go?

PA: Well, I just talked to, you know, the guys I was talking about, Chuck Little and Jimmy Yore and the guys I met the first day I arrived. We were all going to go to the same place, and so, that's all that mattered, and so, we all went to the same place, yes.

SH: Which fraternity is that?

PA: Zeta Psi. …

SH: Did you live at the house?

PA: No. My sophomore year, I lived with a guy from the same floor, Alan Brown. I would love to find Alan Brown. He was just the greatest guy. His parents owned a bakery on Weequahic Avenue in Newark, and do you ever read Philip Roth? Well, Alan Brown … had more stories, Philip Roth would've loved him, because he's, you know, [from] the same neighborhood. … Alan was a pianist and he'd go home on weekends and he had to take lessons in New York and he'd come back every weekend with boxes full of baked goods. I mean, everybody knew when Alan was coming back from Newark, because he'd, you know, bring stuff from the bakery, but I roomed with him my sophomore year.

SH: Still in Livingston?

PA: No. What's the third "river dorm," [three dormitories along the Raritan River]?

MP: Frelinghuysen?

PA: Right.

MB: I live there this year.

PA: Yes, that's where it was, yes. … This is a little bit of an aside, but, when we were talking about freshman year, I just walked down George Street, and it's unrecognizable, of course, I mean, but one of the strongest memories I have, and, when we were mentioning Douglass, I met this young woman at Douglass and we really hit it off, I mean, and she was a real fan of the Kennedys, as were many young people. … I was in an exam, with my friend, Chuck, when Kennedy was shot and we came out of the exam. They didn't tell us, they didn't stop the exam, and, as we came out, they told us that he had been shot and I said, "Oh, no."

SH: Was this other classmates telling you?

PA: I don't know. I think it was one of the RAs, or what did they call the …

SH: Preceptors?

PA: Right, yes, … the grad students or whoever ran the recitations.

SH: Or the TA?

PA: TAs, right, not RA, TAs.

SH: Okay. I was thinking your dorm person came over.

PA: Right. No, no, the TAs, and I just knew that Dianna, the girls I was dating, was going to really be crushed and I said, "I've got … to go over to Douglass and see," because I knew she was in an exam, too. I caught the shuttle bus and we drove down George Street and I will never forget that sight. People everywhere were in mourning. It was just something. … You'd see people leaning against the wall, just staring at the sidewalk. It was frightening and, yes, that was a day, and I got over there before she got out of the exam and she came out and they were telling them and she just fell apart.

SH: Did your parents talk about the reaction in Washington?

PA: Yes. Well, the school stopped and I went home.

SH: Did you really?

PA: Well, it was going to stop anyway, because it was Thanksgiving, and so, you know, we were taking our midterm exams. Midterms used to be right before Thanksgiving, and then, you came back and we went all [winter]. I don't know whether the semester schedule is the same, but, so, I was in DC during the funeral and the laying in state and all of that.

SH: Did you go?

PA: No, I didn't, and, you know, I liked Kennedy, but … he wasn't, you know, an idol to me or anything, like, the Kennedy mystique hadn't grabbed me as it had a lot [of others]. I mean, I was

terribly saddened by the fact that he was assassinated, obviously, but, you know, to go down and stand in the cold for a night-and-a-half to get to walk by, no, I didn't go.

SH: Is there something special about Kennedy because you had an Irish Catholic background?

PA: I think it was for some people. For me, you know, it wasn't a big deal. I think the young woman I was talking about, she was Catholic, she wasn't Irish, and, you know, Jackie O, my current wife, she was nuts about, you know, Jackie. Well, she wasn't Jackie O then, Jackie Kennedy, you know. I think there really was a mystique and … it was just a terrible episode in our history when he was killed.

SH: Then, you come back and finish up your sophomore year.

PA: No, I was a freshman. … You know, I was still kind of aghast … at living away from home and being in New Jersey to begin with, yes. …

SH: What did you do that summer after your freshman year, before your sophomore year?

PA: I had a job that I'd been doing. I worked for DC public schools, you know, painting and, you know, just [as a] laborer. It was a pretty good paying job at the time. … You know, it was above minimum wage, anyway.

SH: What did your brothers and sisters think now that you were back?

PA: I never paid much attention to them. [laughter] No, I really didn't. My older brother had gone away to the Marine Corps and I had [gone to Rutgers] and my next two siblings under me were two sisters, and then, there was a brother, but he was six years younger than I was. So, you know, I really didn't have [any companions]. They were just a nuisance. [laughter] I mean, you know, it's not that we were at each other's throats, but there wasn't a whole lot of a relationship.

SH: Some of the people that we have interviewed from large families said that, when they got back, the younger ones kind of just groaned.

PA: Oh, I'm sure they weren't too thrilled to see me back.

SH: Talk about some of the activities that you became involved with in your sophomore year here at Rutgers. What are some of your memories of being here in Rutgers in 1964?

PA: Sophomore year, I really have strong memories of my roommate, Alan Brown. I mean, we really got along well together. At that time, I had joined the fraternity. So, I was living up here in Frelinghuysen, but … one of the reasons I joined the fraternity was, again, I could do it for less money than if I didn't, because you got your meals free if you waited the meals. I mean, it sounds like I was working myself to death. I wasn't, but, I mean, I ate all the meals free, because I waited tables for every meal. So, that was one of the things about the fraternity, you know, those people who needed the cash could make out pretty well, as far as, you know, food.

SH: You talked about wearing a jacket and tie. What other parties or other social events took place at the Zeta Psi House and how were they run? Then, we have to ask the question, was there a tunnel from the Zeta Psi House to the Corner Tavern?

PA: You know, it looks like there could have been. I mean, there was a big hole in the back of the bar, that I don't know whether there really was or not. I mean, it's a nice story, but, you know, why would you dig the tunnel? If it was Prohibition, they weren't selling beer anyway. I don't know what the background there is. There may have been something. …

SH: We have to ask that of all the Zeta Psi brothers.

PA: Yes, I don't think there was. It just kind of looked that way, but, at that time, … there was a lot more formality. We would have, we used to call it, "the pink tea." … What it really was was a faculty tea and we would have a pianist come in, and would serve tea and invite all of our professors and it would be a fairly formal afternoon affair. I can't imagine that that type of thing is still done.

SH: Did your friend George Brown play the piano?

PA: Alan Brown. No, … Alan was mostly jazz. I mean, he'd go into New York a couple of times a week to take lessons. He was really very serious about it, but he wasn't classical and, you know, things were pretty formal because we had a housemother, and the housemothers, you know, they were treated pretty well. That's one thing nobody would ever think of doing, is crossing the housemother. …

SH: Was it always the same woman?

PA: I think we switched. There was an older woman the first year, and then, we had to find another housemother, and we did. … They had an apartment in the house and you had to wear a coat and tie to dinner and they'd ring the dinner bell and everybody'd have to stand and wait for her to make her [entrance]. You know, it's like the Queen of England. She'd have to show up and she'd have to walk in first and everybody would remain standing until she was there, and only when she sat did everybody else sit down, and, you know, it was kind of nice. I mean, it sounds a little old fashioned, but, well, it was forty years ago, so, I guess it is old fashioned, but … it was nice. There were … a couple other formal fundraising things and, you know, in some respects, I think a lot of the guys really bought into it as a good thing to do. … I'm sure others just looked at it as a guise of acceptability, you know, to cover up the fact that it was mostly a pretty, you know, raucous, beer drinking parlor. [laughter] …

SH: You are confirming that there was drinking on campus.

PA: There was a huge amount of drinking on campus, I mean, on party [weekends], on big weekends, I don't know whether they have big weekends anymore, soph hop and junior prom and there was a military ball. There were three big weekends, and, [at] the fraternity house, we'd have twenty-three kegs of beer for a weekend. … Yes, they were something, but the fraternity

houses had to empty out, because … your girlfriends would stay in the fraternity house and the housemother made sure that the doors were locked and all of this other stuff. …

SH: Were there other things that the fraternity was involved in within the campus, or the Inter-Fraternity Council?

PA: You know, there was intramurals and there was an Inter-Fraternity Council, and I really wasn't interested in either part of it. … Other than work, the only other extracurricular activity I was in, I worked on the yearbook for a couple of years.

SH: Did you?

PA: Yes, and that was it. … I worked pretty hard on my academics. I mean, … it wasn't all sandwiches, cake, milk and ice cream and sheet metal. I mean, I really enjoyed my classes immensely. I mean, it was intellectually challenging. I took some just fabulous courses here and I loved history, and so, I spent a lot of time on my studies.

SH: Who was your favorite professor?

PA: You know, I wish I could remember his name. I took a religion course that was one of the best courses I've ever had. It prompted me to make my children study religion, as a discipline. Although we didn't really raise them in any particular religion, I wanted them to understand religion and understand … the various parts of the major religions and some of the minor religions. … I can't remember the professor's name, but it was a great course. I think it was a year long and, yes, I liked [it]. … I had an English professor. I was in honors English and I don't know how they figured out who would be in honors composition, because your first year was composition, but I guess from tests or whatever, they said I could go into this honors thing. So, I did and the guy's name was (Akeysean?) and he lived in New York and he'd come down on the train every morning. … I'll never forget this. The first day in class, he stared at everything, grumbled a little, it was a little, small class, and he went to the blackboard and he wrote, "Piss," "Fuck," and, "Corruption," and then, he'd turn around and he looked at us again. … He growled and grumbled and he said, "Why aren't you writing?" That's all he said and he just put those three words on the board, and then, told us to start writing. "Okay, okay." So, I mean, it was clear this guy was going to be challenging. [laughter] Yes, I enjoyed writing and I enjoyed that class. I enjoyed writing about history, too. I liked term papers. I mean, you know, I can't say I liked it. You know, staying up all night getting a paper in at the last minute's not fun, but I did enjoy it once it was finished and doing the final edits. … I was proud of some of the things I wrote and I did enjoy it, but, you know, I'm blanking on some of the history professors, the real controversial guy about slavery.

SH: Eugene Genovese.

PA: Genovese and … [Warren] Sussman and McCormick, right. Is he related to …

SH: His father.

PA: I was going to say, I saw [the name], "Richard McCormick," I said, "Hey, that's the guy," and then, I saw him stand up and I said, "Well, that's a different guy." … That's his son, is that right? …

SH: Richard L. McCormick was the father.

PA: He was great.

SH: No, wait, I have it backwards. Richard L. McCormick is our current president. Richard P. McCormick was the father.

PA: Yes, he was good. He was a great [professor], you know.

SH: He passed away recently.

PA: Yes, he was a great professor. Yes, I really enjoyed the academics. I just felt really challenged. …

SH: As a young man here on campus, was there any talk of Vietnam yet, in your sophomore year, 1964-1965, in the fraternity, perhaps?

PA: You know, most of the guys in the fraternity were in ROTC, so, I saw them trundling off in their uniforms all the time. … Nothing really dawned on me. … I just said, "Glad it's not me," but they were starting to get paid by that time and I was a little jealous of that, but, so, I knew a lot of guys that were, and still do, … very *gung ho* about being in the military. We're having a reunion this weekend, and I organized it, myself and Chuck Little, and a lot of these guys, one of the guys is a general [who] is coming and a lot of the guys that are showing up were colonels and generals, or one general and a bunch of colonels and lieutenant colonels, and made careers out of it, but, … you know, I just wasn't aware of the controversy. I mean, I knew Vietnam was going on. I guess I knew that the draft had been instituted, … but nothing really lit up until my junior year. I don't remember it in my sophomore year.

SH: What happened in your junior year that made you so aware?

PA: Another good friend, who's here this weekend, … he lives down in Brownsville, Texas, he took me aside, and they used to call me PJ, that's my initials, and I guess he said, "PJ, we're going to get our asses blown off." I said, "Bob, what are you talking about?" and he said, "You know, the draft, the draft, … how are you going to avoid the draft?" I said, "Well, I don't know. I hadn't really thought about that," and he says, and this other guy, Gary Christ, he said, "Come on. We're going to go down to Perth Amboy and sign up for the Navy." He said, "They've got this really neat program," and this was [the] fall of, I guess it would have been '65 or the winter of '66. So, I said, "Well, okay, I don't want to get my ass blown off, so, I'll go with you," and we went down. There's this program, it was called the ROC [Reserve Officer Candidate] program, and it had nothing to do with the Rolling Stones. … It meant something, but what it meant was, you signed up down in Perth Amboy to be in the Navy Reserves as an enlisted man, but, for six weeks during the summer between your junior-senior year, they sent you up to Newport, Rhode

Island, to Officer Candidate School. Then, you'd come back and you'd go to the Reserve meetings, your senior year, and then, after you graduated, you could go back to OCS and finish your training, and then, you'd get a commission. So, that's what we did, and so, when I graduated, boom, I went in the Navy. … Well, I went up to OCS, up to Newport, Rhode Island, completed naval officer candidate training and got commissioned that fall.

SH: Did your attitude towards school change then, once you had made that decision in your junior year? When you came back for your senior year, were you more serious?

PA: You know, I have one strong recollection of [that era]. There was a protest on campus and I don't know whether it was the end of junior year or the beginning of senior year, which would have been the fall of '66, but things were really starting to heat up and there was a protest here. … You know, I wasn't interested in it one way or the other, but a bunch of guys that were in ROTC apparently had gone to the protest in uniform, to show the opposition sentiment, and, apparently, there'd been some name-calling and shouting. … You know, I don't think it went beyond that, but there was clearly a confrontation and I do remember being a little bit torn about that, because the ROTC guys came back and it struck me that it was kind of a bullying attitude that they'd taken, that they'd shown those protestors, and I don't know whether I had sentiments that leaned towards the protestors or not, but maybe it's just my sentiment towards the underdog. [laughter] … I said, "Geez, you know, that sounds awful." … Apparently, the confrontation had been initiated by the anti-protest side and some of the guys I knew apparently had been part of that and I said, "Geez, that's…;" you know, it gave me an uncomfortable feeling.

SH: Had you, at this point, moved into the fraternity house or were you still living in the dorms?

PA: No. In my junior year, I lived in the fraternity house.

SH: You stayed there in your senior year as well.

PA: For a half year. I got married in the December of my senior year and lived in a little, teeny apartment. Right in the shadow of the fraternity house, there's a little apartment [building], I guess that's Somerset, a little apartment building. So, I lived there the second half of my senior year.

SH: Was this the woman from NJC?

PA: No, no. It wasn't, no. [laughter]

SH: How did you meet your wife?

PA: A friend in the fraternity had introduced us. … Anyway, it was a friend, a friend of his, a mutual friend that he'd known for a number of years.

SH: She was not at …

PA: She was not at Rutgers or at Douglass, no.

SH: Knowing that you were going to go to OCS, did your wife stay here? You do not take your wife to OCS.

PA: No, you don't, because it's only; you know, you're a "forty-five-day wonder times two." [laughter] So, we were "ninety-day wonders," but, no, no, she stayed here, and then, she moved back with her parents for a couple of weeks, until I got out of OCS, and then, we moved to Norfolk, because my ship … was actually in Little Creek, Virginia, which is right next to Norfolk, so, we moved down there.

SH: Do you remember anything about your senior year, your graduation, or any of the activities that you were involved in?

PA: You know, yes, not so much. I mean, the fact that I'd fallen in love and maybe did something a little impulsive and got married really drew me away from the fraternity house and from … college life, and so, you know, my focus more was, "Well, I'm going in the Navy and I'm married," and, you know, those things … predominated what was going on in my head at the time.

SH: When you moved to Virginia, what were you assigned to? Did you know from OCS what ship you were assigned to?

PA: Oh, you know, from OCS, I forgot about that, we were sent to, or I was sent, and my wife moved with me, because we were going to be there for ninety days, … the Philadelphia Naval Yard, and I was sent to school. Was it ninety days? I think it might have been ninety days, even 120 days. … That was the center for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Warfare School. … I had been assigned; you know, they never assign you to anything that's related to your background, whatsoever. Engineers always end up doing something that makes no sense at all, in any way. So, I was assigned to the engineering department of an LST, the LST-1175, the *York County*, USS *York County*, and I was going to be in the engineering department. English/history major, engineering department, perfect sense, [laughter] and I was going to be the specialist for nuclear, biological, chemical warfare, which meant defense against nuclear, chemical, biological warfare, because these ships were not really the combatants. In other words, they were troop carriers and landing [craft]. You know, an LST is that ship that has a very shallow draft and it actually rides up on the beach and the whole bow doors open, and then, the Marines rush out, yelling and screaming, and it's one of those ships. … So, we didn't have any nuclear or biological or chemical weapons, it was just that every ship had somebody that was assigned to defend against it and be the specialist on … what you would do in the case of a nuclear, chemical, biological … attack. So, I had to go to school in Philadelphia for that, for ninety days, after OCS, and then, I went to the ship in; … it would have been early '68, right?

SH: Okay. Was the ship in the yard?

PA: The ship was just about to deploy, so, the ship was in home port, in Little Creek, and I was on that ship a total of about thirty months and we were underway, out of home port, about twenty-four of them. I mean, … we just never were in home port. They just kept us deployed,

because a lot of the ships were in the Pacific, because of Vietnam, and these ships are used to train the Marines, and so, … Marines were coming back and forth from Vietnam, and so, we were constantly taking Marines down to training and landings in the Caribbean and in the Mediterranean.

SH: You were part of these war tactical forces training courses.

PA: Yes. … The whole idea was training with the Marine Corps. … They're called the amphibious Navy and the only purpose of the amphibious Navy is to get people ashore, and so, … by nature of its intent, you're constantly [called upon]. If they need to train, they need your ship to do it, because they're always training with these landing vehicles and they called them amtracs, [slang for amphibious tractors]. … I still don't understand how these things floated. … You know, you wouldn't even beach, you'd just lower the bow door, and these personnel carriers would go right off of the ramp into the water and they'd submerge, and then, they'd bob back up, … with about that much of it above the surface, and they'd make for the beach. So, the Marine Corps was always training and they couldn't do their training without our type of ship and, plus, … there was always a US presence in the Mediterranean, and so, you'd deploy to the Mediterranean in case there was trouble in the Middle East, or whatever. So, we were deployed, but I guess it was called the Seventh Fleet, is in the Mediterranean, and so, we were deployed with them for awhile, and so, we were underway and out of home port at least eighty percent of the time I was aboard the ship.

SH: Did your duties ever change or were you always the engineering officer?

PA: Well, no, when I went onboard as an ensign, they were giving promotions really fast in those days. I was an ensign for a year and, on the ship, there were no regular officers, except for the captain. I mean, everybody else was a "ninety-day wonder," literally. … There were ten officers on the ship. Sometimes, the executive officer would be regular Navy, too, but the rest of us were all "ninety-day wonders," and so, … you were always in rotation. So, you'd spend a year as the electrical officer and the electrical officer was generally trained as the NBC warfare officer, and then, the next year, you'd be the main propulsion assistant, and then, the third year, you would be the chief engineer. … It was actually that regimented, so that by the third year I was on the ship, I was the chief engineer and I was a … lieutenant, j.g., [junior grade].

SH: What are some of the incidents that you remember in the training exercises, and then, the deployment with the Seventh Fleet? Were you still training when you were in the Mediterranean? Was that continued?

PA: Yes, yes. I mean, you know, it's terrible to put it this way, but, … even if you weren't training, you've got to pretend that you're training, otherwise, the Marines are going to go stir-crazy, and there's nothing [to do].

SH: You always had a full complement onboard.

PA: You always had Marines. Sometimes, we were lucky. We'd drop them off on the beach and they'd go up in the hills and fight in the hills and we'd get to go to liberty ports. I was so

glad I was in the Navy and not in the Marine Corps, [laughter] but, you know, there's some very intense memories I have. … The deployment we made to the Mediterranean, we left Little Creek and went down to Morehead City, [North Carolina], to pick up the Marines and these Marines had all just come back from Vietnam and, frankly, a lot of them were a mess. You know, … the day we got underway, they stopped us a day out, because there'd been a riot and a murder and they figured the murderer was on our ship, and so, you know, by interviews of eyewitnesses and everything they figured out who had been involved in this [incident].

SH: The riot had taken place at Morehead.

PA: It was on the Marine Corps base and, … you know, these guys weren't in boot camp anymore. So, they were Vietnam vets and they had come back and a lot of them had come back as pretty angry people, and some of them with drug problems, and the racial tension was just terrible. … My understanding of the fight, that had happened in the EM club the night before we deployed, it had some racial overtones and that one of the guys had been injured badly enough that he died. So, it was murder, and so, they held us up offshore for awhile and they finally came out and they took off one or two Marines. The officers with the Marines were also all back from Vietnam. Some of them were hardcore regular guys and some of them were "ninety-day wonders," too, but, yes, during that deployment, we had some fights on the mess decks that, you know, were knife fights, that, you know, there was blood shed, and, again, I believe that a lot of it was racially motivated. You know, it's sometimes hard to tell what the underlying cause of a fight is, especially when there's a lot of guys involved. There may have been tensions, but the fact that one guy's white and one guy's black, it's going to get racial pretty quick anyway. If people get mad enough, they're going to start yelling at each other using racial terms.

SH: These were the Marines that were having this trouble. Your ship's crew was okay, I mean, they were integrated and cohesive.

PA: Our crew, yes, was integrated and they got along pretty well. I think we might have had a couple of incidences in the three years I was in there. … I don't remember that there was any intentional segregation or voluntary segregation of whites and blacks who didn't get along among the ship's crew. I don't remember that at all and I remember the crew getting along fairly well. … You know, when you've got young men, there's going to be occasional fights, but I don't remember the kind of racial tension that I perceived among the troops that had come back from Vietnam, and this was in '68. No, … that deployment was in '69, and, yes, it hurt to be part of, I mean, … not commenting on the war itself, but, I mean, everybody knows what was going on after that Tet Offensive in '68. I mean, the mood of the country started to swing and the mood within the military started to swing and it started to swing clearly among the enlisted guys. I didn't have any personal experience with the Army, but I did with the Marine Corps and, you know, there was a lot of hostility about, "Why did we have to go through that?" and, you know, a lot of young people got killed and they were wondering, "Why?" and they were angry. … They'd seen and done some terrible things over there, that maybe they're still not recovered from, but I think it hurt all of us to be part of [that], you know. It's one of those things where … it's terrible to be a victim, but it's also terrible to be part of the perpetrator, too, and so, it was a tough time. It was a tough time to be in the military, I think, and from my perspective and what I [experienced].

SH: Ambivalent feelings as to where you are and what your purpose is.

PA: I wasn't ambivalent at all. I was part of, there was this thing called the Concerned Officers Movement, which was a group of active duty officers who were loyal, but were anti-war, and we made it known.

SH: When did you organize that? How did you participate in that?

PA: Well, by signing things. … Being at sea, it's hard to participate. The Concerned Officers Movement really started outside of the Army bases. There was a real anti-war movement within the military, and some would, did you ever see the movie *Yes Sir, No Sir*? [*Sir! No Sir!* (2005)] yes, that, you know, people didn't think it was just what they were doing. … So, as an outgrowth of that military anti-war movement, some officers started to get together, and it wasn't hard for us. … There were a couple of guys, … as I said, we were all "ninety-day wonders" on the ship, and I don't think any of the officers on the ship were very excited about our involvement in Vietnam by '69. '69-'70, people were wondering, … "How are we going to end this thing? How are we going to get out?" and, "The sooner the better," and one guy that was on my ship was very active with some other guys that had [gone to school with him]. He had gone to Yale and he had stayed very close to some of his classmates who were in the military, who had let him know about the Concerned Officers Movement, and so, we both signed up for it and were pretty vocal about, you know, being loyal officers who would follow orders, but we don't think this is making any sense and we are active members of a movement to sue for peace.

SH: Was any of this put on the official record, as far as you know?

PA: I don't know. … My friend, Gordon, I know … it was on him, because he got walked out of the military all in one day, without being told that … it was going to happen to him. … When he left the ship, … he was on the ship for two years, and then, he was sent to a job in the Pentagon. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

MP: This continues an interview with Mr. Paul Allman on May 11, 2007, with Michael Perchiacca, Matt Bonasia and Sandra Stewart Holyoak in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

SH: Please, continue, Mr. Allman. We were talking about your friend. I am not sure that all got on the tape.

PA: Yes. I was just saying that my friend, Gordon, with whom I had signed up for this Concerned Officers Movement, I'm not quite sure what prompted him. Most of the "ninety-day wonders," when you got assigned to a ship, the idea was you'd be on that ship for a year-and-a-half, and then, you'd be rotated to another position. In my case, I stayed my whole three years on one ship. Gordon was rotated out and he was sent to a shore position at the Pentagon, … where he met a lot of other guys who were in the Concerned Officers Movement, and, of course, it was easy to be more active if you were ashore.

SH: That is what I was going to say. It was like they were not trying to keep him from being involved.

PA: You know, I think … that there was a clear dissatisfaction with people being so verbally and obviously against the war while being an officer in the military, and he came to work one day and he was walked through his discharge all in one day. [laughter]

SH: In the Pentagon.

PA: Right, from the Pentagon. …

SH: Okay. I thought when you pulled into shore, they …

PA: No. He was transferred from our ship and had a job in the Pentagon, and I forget what his job was. He was a briefer of some sort and he was a lieutenant JG, as I was, and he was doing his job, a regular job. … I guess it became more and more obvious to his superiors that he was becoming more and more active with this Concerned Officers Movement and he went to work one day and, by the end of that day, he was a civilian. …

SH: When did you get word that this had happened to him? Are you still on the ship at sea?

PA: … Yes. I don't know … where we were, but I found out pretty [quickly]. The next time I got a letter or the next time we were in port or whatever, I found out.

SH: As a group of officers that have signed this, were you in communication? Did you have a newsletter? Was there some way of communicating?

PA: There was a newsletter and, you know, we didn't get mail very often, you know. It had to come by helicopter or high line from another ship. … That's how I found out about it, but, I mean, I don't think Gordon was very upset about it, [laughter] because he wasn't real thrilled about what was going on anyway, and it sure didn't hurt his career. I mean, he went on to have a great career on Capitol Hill as a legislative assistant, but it was a time when people were becoming much more bold about their feelings, because they were so widespread. It wasn't like you were, you know, a traitor or a weirdo or anything. You were one among many that had come to the conclusion that this war was either … not just, and, also, maybe, not winnable.

SH: Do you think it was pervasive throughout the military?

PA: No. Well, I don't know. You know, … when you're on a ship, you have a very limited perspective. … As far as the numbers who signed up … to be in the Concerned Officers Movement, I believe it was very, very small.

SH: As concerned officers in the Navy specifically?

PA: No, it was all services, and I think it started with Army officers. … As far as the sentiment, a lot of people probably wouldn't want to put their names on things or go to protest marches, which some of us were doing, but, … in discussions with them, they clearly weren't going to stay in and … they weren't real supportive of what was going on. … I think their sentiments were with the protestors, in many cases, not all, and, again, I'm just talking about the Reserve officers that I met and knew, but I knew some that were, you know, … very loyal to the concept that our superior officers and the Commander-in-Chief are right and they're the policymakers and we follow orders. … So, you know, I think it was both. From my perspective, among the Reserve officers, there was more sentiment that was supportive, by '69, of the peace movement.

SH: When you would go into the Mediterranean with the Seventh, or when you went on these exercises, how many ships would be involved in that? Can you kind of paint a picture for us of this training with the Marines? Was it just you?

PA: Usually, there would be an amphibious group and, in that group, you'd have one or two LSTs. You'd have a couple of LSDs; you'd have one. The LSDs were the bigger ships. They were landing ship, docks, where the rear of it could be submerged and amphibious vehicles could come in and out. They were bigger. The LSTs were relatively small. An LST, … at that time, they were about 350 feet. The bigger ships were troop carriers that were strictly troop carriers, and then, there was a LPH, which was helicopters, [landing platform helicopter]. It was a carrier. It was like an aircraft carrier, except it was for helicopters, and so, you'd have an amphibious group that was made up of, you know, maybe ten ships, and then, you know, their relationship with the larger fleet, I didn't see a whole lot of that, you know. Obviously, the whole thing was coordinated, but we coordinated within the amphibious group for exercises and for steaming as a convoy and things of that nature.

SH: How spit-and-polish was the *York County*?

PA: [laughter] Not very. You know, … they'd call it, they probably still do, "the gator Navy," and it wasn't very glamorous to be in "the gator Navy," and that gator referred to being an amphibian, and so, the amphibious Navy, if you were going to become admiral, you didn't want to … be assigned to the amphibs. You wanted to be assigned to something sexy, like a destroyer or a cruiser or something that had the ability to make big bangs, you know, and sink things, [laughter] and, you know, just hauling around a bunch of Marines wasn't a very glamorous job, and so, I think with that goes maybe a little lack of attention to the spit-and-polish. … The COs, the captains of these ships, you know, this may have been the pinnacle of their career. They were probably limited duty officers, or enlisted guys who had worked their way up into the officers' ranks, and none of these guys was on the way to becoming an admiral.

SH: Did your wife share your sentiments and understand?

PA: I think so. Yes, I think yes; … as a matter-of-fact, I know so. I mean, we did go to some peace protests. I was not one of them that went in uniform. I didn't think that made much sense, but, you know, yes, she … had the same sentiments.

SH: We talked about the Civil Rights movement and how it affected Washington. Some of these things are going on at the same time.

PA: I know. … It had added a dynamic to the relationship, the racial relationships, within the service. It heightened the tension, I think, especially the Martin Luther King assassination and, yes, it was a tough time. I mean, … I was never in Vietnam, but I sure saw the results on people. I mean, there were some damaged people. There were some real atrocities that took place and everybody tried to ignore it, you know. It wasn't just people damaging themselves, but, you know, doing really terrible things. It wasn't just napalm, but, you know, the stories that you hear about things that happened in small villages, and abduction and rape and murder and things like that were a reality. … One of the worst experiences I had, I was … out on deck one night and we were underway and I came upon a bunch of Marines that were sharing their pictures from Vietnam and they were terrible. I mean, they were pictures of atrocities that they were part of, mutilations and things that were just disgusting. … I talked to their lieutenant, because he was a young guy that seemed like a pretty reasonable guy, and he said, "Okay, I'll take care of it," and nothing happened, and I talked to my CO and nothing happened. You know, they were damaged people. I mean, obviously, the people who were their victims were dead … and damaged, but the fact that they had committed these atrocities, they were damaged, too, and everybody who knew they did it was damaged … by it, and, you know, probably still suffer from it, you know, and it's done in the name of, you know, our flag. You know, war's a terrible thing, you know. I think that that was maybe a war that was really exacerbated by what was happening at home and the fact that people didn't have faith in why we were doing it, or how we were going to get out of it, but the number of people that we were sending over there, and they were all young and they were all, you know, a good majority of them, were drafted. Well, the Marines weren't drafted. …

SH: Had your brother gotten out by this time?

PA: Yes.

SH: Had he served in Vietnam?

PA: No, he hadn't. What was funny, though, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, he served. You know, they packed up all the Marines from Camp Lejeune, the big Marine base down there, near Morehead City, in Cherry Point. Anyway …

SH: Lejeune

PA: Lejeune, right, and they put them all on these amphibs and sent them down there to be part of the blockade and the ship he was on was the USS *York County,* the ship that I ended up on for three years, which was …

SH: Ironic?

PA: Yes, it was, but he got out. … I think he got out in '65 or '66 and he did not go to Vietnam.

SH: Obviously, you did not entertain the Navy as a career.

PA: Well, just for fun, I asked them, "What's my next assignment going to be?" I really didn't entertain it as a career, but I was just curious, and my next assignment would have been a swift boat in the Mekong Delta. So, I said, … "Well, maybe not, guys." [laughter] You know, I probably wouldn't have stayed out, you know. If they'd given me a shore duty at Rutgers University as a ROTC instructor, I might have thought about it, but it definitely wasn't going to be a career. I did ask them what my next assignment would be though. [laughter]

SH: Just to be sure, right.

PA: Right, right.

SH: Did you have plans then? Had you already started to develop an idea of what you wanted to do when you got out of the military? I do not want to rush you if there is more you want to talk about as far as your Navy stories.

PA: Well, you know, the only thing, I just thought of, I had a very close friend in high school … who went in and, you know, … we've all got a lot of Vietnam stories, but this guy was a pretty close friend and he never worked after Vietnam. He came back and he said, "You know, I just don't feel like…" I forget exactly how he put it. He had killed a guy. … At this time, drugs were a real problem over there and he shot this guy and he went up to him, and the guy was lying there, and he searched him to see if he had any drugs, because everybody was looking for pot or whatever they could [find], and … the hole in his chest was still smoking and he wasn't dead and he grabbed him by the ankle. My friend, Joe, was looking down at this guy and the guy's looking up at him and, all of a sudden, there wasn't any more war. It was just this human being who was dying and gripping him harder and harder and saying goodbye to life, and Joe just fell apart. … He just said, "You know, I don't know what life is all about," and he just moved to Lake Tahoe and he became gambler and he never worked again, "never came down out of the hills," but, you know, there's about a thousand of those stories.

SH: The person that he shot was a Vietcong.

PA: Right, right. Well, that's not a bad question. Yes, it was the enemy.

SH: It is like one of the stories that was recounted today in the memorial section of the program, [the annual Rutgers Living History Society meeting]. It happened to a gentleman in World War II as well.

PA: Exactly, when you're in the trenches with somebody else and one of you is going to die, yes.

SH: At that point, we still do not see the light at the end of the tunnel, politically, in America. How does one make plans for what you are going to do? You were not going to stay in the Navy.

PA: Yes. Well, I revisited …

SH: It is not long after that the war is officially over.

PA: Well, it's quite awhile, though, yes, I mean, amazingly.

SH: However, at that point, I do not think that anyone our age saw the end of the tunnel.

PA: Right.

SH: Or saw a light. There was that long, dark tunnel.

PA: Yes. I knew I was going to get out after hearing about my next assignment, [laughter] but, before that, … I really wasn't sure, and I had wanted to be a teacher, but I had gotten out of the teacher certification program at Rutgers, because it was too time-consuming. It demanded too many credits and … there were too many courses I wanted to take. So, I was not prepared. I started [looking for jobs], you know. No public school system would have me, because I didn't have a teaching certificate, and so, I started applying to teach in … private schools and couldn't find a position, and so, I was in a little bit of a quandary, but, at the time; … you know, Richard Nixon, today, looks like a liberal compared to what a lot of liberals are. I mean, he had just signed a law. It was the … LEAA, something law enforcement blank act, [Law Enforcement Assistance Administration], and what he had done is, he threw a lot of money towards law enforcement, but, unlike today, when they throw money at law enforcement, fifty cents of every dollar was to go to education counseling and rehabilitation, as opposed to guns and tazers and bullets and things, whereas, now, it all goes to the hardware, as opposed to the education. … So, all of a sudden, there opened up, in a lot of states, a lot of jobs in counseling and rehabilitation in the departments of parole and probation, things like that. So, my brother … had taken one of these jobs when he'd gotten out of the Marine Corps and he said, "You know, they are really hiring," and so, I took a job as a probation officer … in the State of Maryland, where I was working with a lot of returned vets who had not adjusted very well or were still strung out on drugs or, you know, just could not re-enter society and had gotten in trouble. … So, that's what I did for a couple of years. I did that for three years. In fact, one time, I was with a drug caseload, one time. Anyway, so, I worked in the … Parole and Probation Department for the State of Maryland for three years after that, and that's hard work. You know, I'd seen enough damaged people, I'd thought. Then, after Parole and Probation, I'd say now I know I'm not strong enough to spend my life dealing with people who've had such problems, and so, I finally got into teaching and had started my master's. … I was working on my master's degree in English and finally realized that wasn't going to take me anywhere that I could make a living, either, so, I did get back into education and I got my master's degree at the University of Maryland in education. So, I went into teaching.

SH: Where have you taught?

PA: Well, I taught for six years at a maritime academy, maritime school, which was union affiliated, and so, I was teaching maritime subjects, and they hired me because I'd been in the Navy, and then, Ronald Reagan called me. [laughter] It was a strange turn of events, that the

Reagan Administration wanted a huge naval build up, a huge military build up. Some people would say that we spent the Soviet Union out of existence and they give Ronald Reagan credit for that, because he spent so much. … All of a sudden, the Navy was hiring all these people who could write curriculum or curricula, and so, they offered me a really good job. So, I went to work as a civil servant, Federal employee, which was a great thing for me. I got into some really interesting things in Federal Government, and my last eight years, I spent at the Peace Corps, which was, you know, a great experience. … So, all that happened [laughter] because of a strange [occurrence], because of Bob Lewis, who dragged me down to Perth Amboy because I didn't want to get my butt shot off in my junior year at Rutgers. [laughter] … That led to the Navy, which led to this maritime school, which led to the Department of Defense, which led to the Peace Corps.

SH: Did you go out of country with the Peace Corps?

PA: I was paid staff; I was not a volunteer. So, I was in the headquarters staff, but I spent a lot of time overseas, at different [posts]. I was not permanently stationed for a two-year tour at any one post, but I spent a lot of time working at various posts all over Africa and Asia and Central and South America, and then, I continued consulting afterwards and spent more time as a consultant in those areas, which was, you know, again, unplanned. My whole life has just been one chain of events that have worked out okay.

SH: Extremely interesting, though.

PA: Yes.

SH: Do either of you have a question you would like to ask, going back or forward?

MP: I just have one question, going back. What was your father's views, as a veteran of World War II, on Vietnam and your stance with the Concerned Officers?

PA: Yes. I'm glad you asked that, because I'd forgotten that, and, initially, he was supportive of the government and he believed that these people have all of the information, they are in a position to make decisions, and, as an American, I support them. … I think he held that pretty far into the war and I think it was probably '68, '69, when he started to see the light, that this really was a situation where we really weren't in a position where we could do good over there, that we were not going to be able to influence the outcome, and that we were sacrificing peace at home and a lot of young men and a lot of assets for an indefensible reason. So, he did switch, but we had some real over-the-Thanksgiving-turkey arguments early on, but, … maybe by '69, he, with a lot of other Americans, had changed his views. You know, it's funny, when I talk to my kids, today, about Vietnam, and I talk to them about how things changed and how people [felt], initially, Americans want to love our country and we want to believe that our leaders are well informed and are doing the right thing, not just for Americans, but for world peace and for the good of those people we're out to help, and I think we go into these things very supportive, because we think we are good people doing the right thing for ourselves and others. … It takes awhile to turn things and, when I talk to my children about Vietnam and the way things turned and the protests, … they say, "You know, you can talk about your protests, and you can make

yourself feel good about taking that side, but it didn't make any difference. It really didn't have any effect. You can march on the street all you [want]." … They're pretty cynical. I mean, I think that's why there's not protests in the streets now, [in response to the War in Iraq]. They don't think that our protests had any effect and, when you look at how long the war continued to go on, you know, these massive protests are going on in the street and kids are getting killed at Kent State and on and on and on, how long did the war keep going? … Meanwhile, in 1972, Richard Nixon, 72's pretty far into the war, he carried forty-nine out of fifty states. What does that say? … So, when I tell my kids, … I ask them, "Where are the protestors?" … they say, "It doesn't do any good. It didn't do any good in Vietnam," and most of the people who you talk to from the Vietnam era think that the protests, you know, stopped the war. Well, maybe not; it did go on for another, you know, whatever, you know, four or five years and Nixon was astoundingly, resoundingly, reelected. So, you know, it's made me rethink, you know, what the protest effect was, also. Maybe it didn't have an effect, maybe it prolonged the war. You know, I think that needs some analysis.

SH: Was it a polarizing rather than an influential tactic.

PA: Yes, it was definitely polarizing. There was no question about it, in my opinion, … definitely polarizing.

SH: It was like the line in the sand.

PA: Yes. So, did that polarization make things go on longer?

SH: Big discussions are being held on that very subject.

PA: There's a lot of comparison.

MB: Everyone has an opinion on it.

PA: Yes.

SH: To then serve with the Peace Corps, was this something that you joined because of idealism and wanting to make the world a better place?

PA: No, I think; yes, I believe in the Peace Corps and … my brother was in the Peace Corps and I've had a lot of friends in the Peace Corps. My wife's brother was in the Peace Corps and I've always liked the concept of it and I do think that that kind of person-to-person relationship can change opinions and can influence things for the better. It's on such a small scale that, in the big scheme of things, I'm maybe a little less optimistic about how influential it is, but it sure changes individual's lives and, you know, maybe that's all we can ask, is to influence the people we come in contact with, but, yes, I'm a real supporter of it and I think it's those kinds of institutions and those kind of volunteer, or not necessarily volunteer, [organizations that do it]. I worked a lot in consulting. I retired in 2001 and I worked for about five years as a consultant and a lot of the consulting was with the Agency for International Development, USAID, and there are so many hardworking, dedicated Americans that have put their life's work into the idea that we can make

a difference in a positive sense, and I tend to believe them, but it has to be done on a large scale. I think, with our assets and our resources in this country, we can be a force for good, positive development and a potential for working towards peace that is maybe a little more productive than some of the routes we've taken.

SH: You came up through the age of the draft, and then, the lottery and, now, the volunteer army. Do you think the volunteer army is the better way to go than the draft, or some sort of service, two-year service?

PA: I'm really in favor of national service. I think the US is really very far away from that ever happening, but I think national service is a great idea and, by that, I don't mean that everybody has to serve in the military, but I think national service, it makes you a better citizen, in my opinion, … because it informs you. … At least in the area of your service, you're much better informed. If it happens to be [the] military, then, you're going to question things. You're going to look at things and say, … "Why are we doing this? … Are we really doing something that's good for something other than…" Well, anyway, it's something that's good, but … where there is national service, I think it's a good idea that anybody who has any objections to military service be able to do their service in something else, whether it's, you know, social worker, or whatever, national parks. Go out and, you know, prune trees in Yosemite, you know, I don't care, but I think it ties a citizen more closely to their country and that we prefer individuals to have a meaningful vote and have a meaningful say in what goes on. I don't know, a country of three hundred million people, it would take a lot of assets, as well as a lot of will and a lot of convincing, to see it happen, but, somehow, I think it's a little out of reach.

SH: Is there any area that we have not covered or anything you would like to leave on the record that we have not asked you about today or encouraged you to speak about?

PA: You know, I don't think so. …

SH: Thank you for coming back to talk to us, taking time out of your big reunion weekend.

PA: Yes, well, I enjoyed it and thank you very much for letting me express my opinions, [laughter] and I hope I've been objective in some things. …

SH: We are looking for your personal stories and your opinions.

PA: Yes.

SH: Thank you so much. This concludes the interview.

PA: Great.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 9/3/08
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 9/10/08

Reviewed by Paul Allman 9/22/08