

RUTGERS THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DOMINICK MAZZAGETTI

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an oral history interview with Mr. Dominick Mazzagetti, on December 3, 2021, with Shaun Illingworth. I am also joined by--Andy and Laila, will you say your names for the record?

Laila Ahmed: Laila Ahmed.

Andy Zhang: Andy Zhang.

SI: Great. Thank you very much for sitting down with us, Mr. Mazzagetti.

Dominick Mazzagetti: You can call me Dominick if you'd like.

SI: Dominick, sure.

DM: It's easier, or Dom.

SI: Thank you. Can you tell us where and when you were born?

DM: I was born in Newark in 1948, Newark, New Jersey.

SI: Okay. For the record, can you tell me your parents' names?

DM: Dominick Mazzagetti was my father. Grace Grimaldi Mazzagetti was my mother. My mother was born in Newark. My father was born in Italy.

SI: Now, starting with your father's side of the family, can you tell us anything you might remember about the family history, as you learned it from him?

DM: My father's side of the family I don't know as much about as I do my mother's side. My father was born in Italy. He came here when he was eighteen. He had, I think, three sisters and one brother. His brother was killed in World War I. My father was born in 1896, so he was older when I was born. Only one of his three sisters came to the United States. She came first, and then he came in 1914 when he was eighteen years old. So, I never met the sisters, obviously, that were in Italy. They died before the first time I went to Italy. My father married, here in the United States, a woman who I believe was also born in Italy. He had four daughters, Gloria, Joyce, Connie and Joan, and their mother died when Joan was about five or six years old. She was the youngest. Then, he met my mother a number of years later and married, and my brother Dan was born in 1947 and I was born 1948.

SI: Did your father ever talk about why he came over?

DM: Oh, not in the sense of, "Let's sit down and talk about why I came to the United States." He was very happy to be in the United States, and his sister had come over first. The little bit I had gleaned from our conversations was that things were not all that great economically. He was

born east of Rome in Abruzzi. I think it was a farming community, and my sisters, or at least one of my sisters, have been back there a number of times. It's nice but not much there still. So, his sister came over first, his oldest sister. I think he was the youngest, and then he came by himself and met with her when he got here.

SI: Do you know how they came to settle in the Newark area?

DM: I know my father did, because that's where his sister was. Why she came to Newark, I have no idea.

SI: Are you familiar with the area that he settled in? Was that the same area that you grew up in?

DM: In Newark?

SI: Yes.

DM: Yes, I lived in Newark as well, and my childhood was in the Vailsburg section. I know my father did not move into the Vailsburg section when he came. He was probably in the Central Ward. His wife's sister had a house in the Central Ward. His sister, Grace, had a house on West End Avenue. I guess it was the Vailsburg section. It was in the West Side. He had a six-family house somewhere in Newark years earlier. He had this six-family house, which he lost in the depression, and there are no six family houses, that I recall, in the Vailsburg section. So, that is probably in the Central Ward, close to his sister-in-law's house, which was a large three-family house right near where the Rutgers campus is now. High Street in Newark, it was High Street. So, it must have been around there, I would suspect, in the Central Ward.

SI: Tell us a little bit about you mother's side of the family, before we go further.

DM: Yes, that side of the family I know better. I believe my mother's parents were both born in Italy, in Sicily. They were Sicilian. They came to the United States at some point. I'm not exactly sure when. I'm not sure whether they were married here or married in Italy. I think they were married here young. My mother was the oldest of twelve children, nine who survived to adulthood. They lived on Ninth Street in Newark, which is the Central Ward, in a three-family house. Very few are still alive today, but a number of them are. I can try to give you all their names. Some of these names are Americanized names of Italian names--the next oldest was Dora or Doris--I'm not really sure what her real name was--then Fanny, whose real name was Aurora, I think. She had a brother Sal. She had a brother Carmen. She had a brother Ben, Benjamin. Her youngest sister was Marie. There was also Neddie. There was a Philomena. She died. She was an adult but died young. I don't know of what. If I had met her, I only met her a couple of times as a very young child. I think there was another Marie--she had died either at childbirth or shortly thereafter--and one other. I think I got them all done. Oh, and my Aunt Tess. I forgot to add Tess, Theresa.

SI: What area were they from in general?

DM: In Newark or in Italy?

SI: In Italy.

DM: In Italy, they were Sicilians.

SI: Sicilians, okay.

DM: My father used to joke, he would to say to me and my brother that we were half Italian and half Sicilian, and that would annoy my mother. [laughter] I believe his first wife was Abruzzese. They were very tight, the Italians. In the early going, the Italians, like many other nationalities, were very tight in terms of marrying within their own society, in this case, Abruzzi being a section of Italy.

SI: Then, when they came here, they were in the Central Ward.

DM: I believe they were first living in the Central Ward. That's my best guess. I never went through that kind of biography with my father.

SI: I meant your mother's family.

DM: Oh, my mother's family, they were always in Newark, as far as I know, on Ninth Street in the Central Ward.

SI: Do you have any idea how your parents met? Were they set up?

DM: Yes. My mother was the oldest, as I said, and she left school very young. She didn't go to high school. She went right to work. She was a seamstress, and my father, at that point--so this would've been in the '40s--my father was a housepainter. He had had a number of jobs and careers, obviously, and he was, I guess, close to fifty at the time. My mother was in her thirties. He was a house painter, and either he was painting their house or painting a nearby house when he met my mother. She had sisters who had married by that time, and she was older, at that time, to get married. She was born in 1914, so she would have been thirty-three, something like that, which at that point, in the '40s, was probably old to be getting married.

SI: I am just curious, do you think she was not married because she had to take care of family?

DM: Oh, absolutely. Yes, I don't think there was any doubt about that. She had to work, and she was a breadwinner. Obviously, my grandfather worked, but my grandmother didn't work, and she had the, by then, nine kids at home. So, that was required. My mother was a godmother to her sister Marie, who was twenty-one years younger than she was.

SI: I see on your survey that your father served in the military. Did he ever talk about his experience?

DM: Not too much. He came over in 1914. He was eighteen years old. I think he was immediately drafted and sent to Georgia, I think, to serve in the Army down there. That's where he got his naturalization papers, which I still have somewhere.

SI: By the time when you can remember, your earliest memories, were you already in Vailsburg?

DM: Oh, yes, I always lived in Vailsburg, 68 Stuyvesant Avenue.

SI: Okay. Tell us a little bit about what that street and that neighborhood were like growing up.

DM: I thought it was a great place. Stuyvesant Avenue was a major thoroughfare, it was a bus route, actually, the 18, which went from Newark to Irvington to Union. Of course, that didn't bother us very much. Our house was right on Stuyvesant Avenue. There was a house, there was a stoop, there was a sidewalk, and then there was the street, which was a bus route. Across the street from us was--this was a residential area, but it had a couple of non-residential buildings--directly across the street from us was Joe's Tavern. Joe's Tavern was there the whole time that I grew up. I don't know whether it's the north or south end of Stuyvesant Avenue [north]. We were half a block from where Stuyvesant Avenue dead-ends into South Orange Avenue. South Orange Avenue is, I always thought, the main road in Newark. It goes all the way from South Orange, down through the Vailsburg section, through the Central Ward, and becomes Market Street in downtown Newark, all the way down past the train station, if you keep following, you go straight down. There are buses that go that way. I can tell you; I was on many of them. We were in that section, in that area.

Stuyvesant Avenue, unlike some other areas in Newark, was a much more mixed ethnic neighborhood. I mean, you had the North Ward, which is obviously Italian. You had the Weequahic section, which was obviously Jewish. Then, there were Black sections back then as well, the South Side, part of Central. Vailsburg was above the Parkway, when the Parkway came in, in the '50s, and had Italians, Germans, Irish, Jewish, no Blacks. There were very few Blacks. The far section of Newark was part of Vailsburg but a separate unit itself, Ivy Hill. Ivy Hill was heavily Jewish. Obviously, there were a lot of Italians. We had Germans living next door, Italians on the other side. That was the area of Newark that I lived in. It was a nice place to grow up, but it was obviously urban. It's all concrete and macadam.

SI: In your household, did your family try to keep up any traditions or practices from Italy?

DM: Sure. Christmas Eve was a particularly important holiday for us. We were clearly Italian. We knew we were Italian, and when I was a kid, the first thing you would ask somebody is, "Where are you from?" You didn't mean Newark. You meant, "Where's your family from?" That wasn't considered, at the time, offensive. In fact, it was considered part of what you know

about people. We were clearly Italian; we followed Italian traditions and ate Italian food. My father and mother both spoke Italian, but my mother didn't speak Italian as a first language. My father did, obviously. He had a heavy accent, and they would occasionally speak Italian in the house, especially when they didn't want me and my brother to know what was going on. There were a lot of Italians around, and my father--I would use the word sponsored, but I don't mean it in the formal sense--he assisted a number of younger Italian men and their families to come to the United States. This is now in the late '50s, early '60s. So, it wasn't like the original migrations from the early part of the 20th century, but I remember it being a big deal to bring them here and then to get the rest of their family here. There was that kind of stuff going on, yes. If your question is, did we follow Italian traditions? Did we know we were Italian? Yes, we did, although my brother and I never spoke Italian, and most of my sisters don't speak Italian.

SI: When you were growing up, your older sisters were still living in the house?

DM: Oh, yes. Oh, absolutely. They were still in the house. My sister, Gloria, is still alive. She's ninety-three. My sister, Joyce, is still alive. She's ninety-one. My sister, Connie, died five or six years ago. She would have been eighty-nine. My sister, Joan, is still alive and very active, as are the others. She's about eighty-five. We were all there in that, by today's standards, tiny house on Stuyvesant Avenue. My father, at some before I remember, enclosed the front porch to add more room at the front of the house, and he extended the kitchen in the back of the house. He had as large a vegetable garden as you could put on two lots in Newark. Most of the lots on Stuyvesant Avenue were twenty-five by a hundred. This particular lot--I imagine my father must have bought it for that reason--was two lots next to each other, so that it was actually a fifty-foot front. In the back, he had this large garden. He also operated his business out of that property. He had a big garage and a shed behind the garage, the kind of shed that if you put up today, they would arrest you for violating all kinds of zoning ordinances. At the time, nobody was paying attention to that kind of stuff.

SI: Tell us a little bit about your early schooling. What were the schools like in Vailsburg?

DM: I thought they were good schools. My first school was Lincoln. We didn't go to any preschool or anything like that. We went to Lincoln School. Lincoln School is still there, and it was an eight or nine-block walk from our house. We started there in kindergarten, I remember that, and went through the sixth grade. We walked to school, my brother and I, by ourselves, after some period. We remember our mother clandestinely following us, hiding behind trees, in the early going, to make sure that we got to school all right. We had to cross seven or eight streets in order to get to Lincoln. There were some crossing guards. There was a crossing guard on Sanford Avenue, which was one of the main drags. We had to cross Stuyvesant; I guess my parents must have helped us cross Stuyvesant. That was an active road. Then, on Richelieu Terrace--the school is on Richelieu Terrace--there was another crossway, the last street, and that was handled by crossing guards that were appointed by the teachers. If you were in the fifth or sixth grade, you could be a crossing guard and then help the younger kids cross the street. My brother and I, at some point, were crossing guards, I remember. There was a candy store right next to that crossing, where you could stop and get a candy for a penny or two pennies. It makes

me sound like I'm 120 years old, but that's, in fact, the case back in the '50s. Lincoln School was a nice school. I remember it very clearly. Like I say, it's still there, and I'm not sure whether there's any additions to it or not.

I'll tell you a personal story about Lincoln School. Lincoln School was about equidistant from our house as another school that went in the opposite direction. If you had gone in the opposite direction the same number of blocks, you would've come to Alexander Street School. Alexander Street School took students from one or two blocks above it and blocks down below it. We went to Lincoln School, which was going in the opposite direction up the hill. My mother, when my brother and I were young and for a good while afterwards, worked as a part-time seamstress at the other end of the block. If the one end of the block was South Orange Avenue, where Stuyvesant came to an end, the other end of the block continued way into Union. At the end of our block there, there was a small commercial building, and there was a drapery company in that building. My mother was an excellent seamstress. That's how she worked when she was fourteen; she started working as a seamstress. She worked in that commercial building. This all has to do with Lincoln School, but I'm sorry I'm taking so long to get there.

SI: No, that is fine.

DM: In order to accommodate the fact that she wasn't home, when my brother and I were in grammar school, she made us--literally made us--go to summer school, and summer school was not held at Lincoln. It was held at Alexander Street School, so that they would keep Lincoln closed, and everybody who needed to go to summer school--my brother and I had to explain that we didn't need to go to summer school--we just had to go to summer school because my mother couldn't be there to take care of us. My sisters were out of the house by then. So, we would go to summer school, and we went like three, four years in a row. It didn't bother me the least bit. They had a band there, so we played in the band too, just like we did at Lincoln.

One year, I had a woman named Mrs. Milstein, who was teaching summer school. So, that was fine; I liked Mrs. Milstein. It was good. Then, that fall, we went back to, obviously, Lincoln School. I was in 3-A. In those days, in Newark, maybe because of overcrowding, they would start children in September--that'd be 3-A, let's say--and they would start children in January. This would be in the first grade, so they'd be 1-B. So, you had 1-A and 1-B, and then you'd stay that way all the way through. I was in 3-A. Now, these schools don't do that anymore. I was in 3-A, and I had Mrs. Steinberg. I was there one or two days, two or three days, in Mrs. Steinberg's class. The principal came in, and he spoke to Mrs. Steinberg. She then called me up and told me to go out into the hall and talk to the principal. Well, of course, I was horrified. [laughter] The principal takes me out into the hall, and he says, "Do you know Mrs. Milstein?" I said, "Yes, I know Mrs. Milstein. I had her for summer school." He said, "Well, you know she's in the classroom right on the other side of this classroom. She teaches 3-B," which was six months ahead. I said, "Oh, that's nice." He said, "She wants you in her class." Who was I to argue with him? I said, "Okay, good." So, he moved me into 3-B. That was the end of it, bing. Now, I'm six months ahead because Mrs. Milstein, for some reason, decided that that's the way it should be. You asked me about going to school in Newark; that's my favorite story.

Now, that affected my life dramatically, because when I got to 5-B, Newark decided they were going to do away with the A and B designation. So, they either moved everybody in the B classes either up a half a grade or back a half a grade, depending on where they stood relative to their learning. I was moved up, so I ended up, instead of being in 5-B, I was in 6-A. Now, I'm a whole year ahead. Nobody's really asked me if I wanted to be a whole year ahead, but it surely did have an impact on me. One of the impacts it had on me was my brother was in 6-A. He was almost exactly a year older; we're a year and ten days apart. So, he was exactly a year ahead of me. I ended up at his class throughout high school, through junior high and high school, and it was not great for him and I'm not sure whether it was great for me. I was socially awkward, and even a year ahead, I was a better student than him. I'm not saying that to--it's just the way it was. We both did fine and we both did well, but when you're in junior high or in high school, it truly makes much more of a difference than when you're seventy-three.

SI: Yes, it does not sound like you had any trouble adjusting to the higher levels.

DM: No, no. The only problem, it wasn't the academics; it was the social stuff. When I graduated high school, I was sixteen. I couldn't drive. I was afraid of girls. That was tough.

SI: Growing up, what did you do for fun? Were you involved in organized activities, like maybe Scouting, or would you play pickup sports, stuff like that?

DM: We played pickup sports. My brother and I and a couple of other kids tried to create a baseball league. We tried out for Little League. Newark had Little League and I think it was pretty good, but back in those days, it wasn't everybody who wants to play plays, or everybody gets on a team. You had to be chosen to be on Little League back in those days, and so we were never good enough. We didn't have the family discipline in the sense that my parents did not have the time and the money to bring us where we needed to be and all that kind of stuff. So, we never got into Little League. We would have pickup games at Vailsburg Park. Vailsburg Park was about an eight-block walk from where we were, and it was a very nice park with multiple baseball and football fields--not football fields--but where you could play football. We would go down there and get into pickup games with whoever showed up, people we didn't know. We did do that. One time, we tried in--I assume it was grammar school, it might have been junior high, it was probably grammar school--we tried to create a league ourselves, but we didn't have a field. We would go into parking lots on Saturdays and start playing baseball. The adults in the neighborhood would go crazy because there were a lot of windows around and that kind of stuff. That never got off the ground. We learned a few lessons trying to do that.

We were in Scouting. That's another interesting story. I'm not sure if you're interested in my interesting stories, or if they're just boring, but my parents wanted to get us into Scouting. My mother went to Sacred Heart Church. This was where we went. They had a Scouting troop, and like baseball, like Little League, there were only so many spots. When my mother asked for us to join, they didn't have any spots. She was disappointed. She ran into Sylvia Pollack in the A&P. Sylvia Pollock lived nearby, and her son Lou was in our class. She was talking to Sylvia

Pollock and told her that she had tried to get us into this Boy Scout troop, but she couldn't. Sylvia Pollock said, "Oh, don't worry. I'm starting ..." and this was a den. It was Cub Scouts, not Boy Scouts, so it was a den. "I'm starting a den with my son Lou and some of his friends, and I'd love to have your boys in our den." My mother said, "Fine." Now, that den was affiliated with the Beth Israel Temple, just like where my mother started was the Catholic Church. My brother and I ended up in an all-Jewish Cub Scout troop, which didn't have any concern for us or my mother, and we had a wonderful time. They very active. They went all over the place, and we stayed with the Cub Scouts, the Boy Scouts and the Explorers right through high school.

My mother ran into a nun, at some point, or my brother spilled the beans to a nun, I guess, that we had been to temple because you were required to go to temple once a year if you were in that den. The nun called my mother [laughter] and gave her hell, so to speak, and said that they would take us then in the church den or whatever. My mother said, "No, they're fine right where they are." We made some good friends doing that.

Of course, we did it in high school as well, and we had a lot of good times in Boy Scouts. We went to Niagara Falls. We went to a lot of different places in New Jersey. We went on camping trips all the time. We went on hikes. Our hikes were always on macadam or concrete, unless we were taken out for a hike. Occasionally, we had to do our own hike and report back, and we would walk up South Orange Avenue up to the South Mountain Reservation, all on sidewalks of course, very dangerous. [laughter]

SI: That is really interesting, the kind of religious element. Had your family been very involved in the church or church activities?

DM: Other than my father going to church every Sunday--my father did and required us to go, and my sisters, and complained about there being no Italian priest--no, nothing other than that. They were all Irish.

SI: Okay.

LA: The schools there, were they diverse racially at all?

DM: Well, we never thought about that. They had to be because the neighborhood was diverse. Everybody knew who everybody was, if you're Polish, if you're Italian, or you're Irish, or you're Jewish, everybody knew, and if they didn't know, they'd ask. [laughter] So, it never was an issue, that I recall. We had only one or two Blacks in the schools while I was there. That's the only difference. Newark, whether it was deliberately or just geographically segregated, it was segregated.

SI: During your years there, did you see the demographics shift at all before you moved out of the area?

DM: No, not so much in Vailsburg. At the very end, in the late '60s, it started to shift, but I saw this shifting in the Central Ward. Most of my mother's family--we were the only ones really in Vailsburg--everybody else left Newark, the folks that were in the Central Ward and some of the others, mostly the Central Ward. The Central Ward had been an Italian section, I think, when I was a kid, and it was starting to change.

SI: When you were going through junior high school and into high school, what interested you the most in school?

DM: When we left Lincoln, we went to Ivy Junior High, which was another couple of blocks away. Ivy Junior High was originally Ivy Grammar School. For some reason, they made it into a junior high school. We started in the seventh grade at Ivy, and when we were in the eighth grade, they made Ivy Junior High School Vailsburg High School, so it went from a grammar school to a high school. There were a couple of oddball things. All the water fountains were very low. We didn't have any fields other than some very poor macadam fields with chain-link fences. We kind of had an unusual experience of going from seventh and eighth grade right through the twelfth grade in that one school. Obviously, the teachers changed. I'm not sure that I answered your question, which was more what?

SI: Academically, what interested you?

DM: Academically, I'm not sure this is the right way to say it; I'm not sure I paid much attention. I went to the classes, I did well in the classes, and that's not the part that I remember about junior high, especially junior high. I still feel today that we got a very good education in the Newark schools, and I, in fact, never had any doubt about it. I really am horrified to see that there are some Newark schools that are still not doing well.

SI: It sounds like you got an opportunity to go out into the country and see different things through the Scouts. Were there other opportunities to travel outside of Newark or Vailsburg?

DM: No, not really. [laughter] My whole life was built around Newark until I went off to law school, and that was one of the reasons I went to Cornell; I wanted to get out of the city just to see what it was like. We'd go down the shore. We didn't go on any extensive road trips or anything like that. We went on a lot of daytrips with my parents but, of course, obviously, within thirty miles of Newark. I didn't get on a plane until I was working for a law firm while I was in law school. We just never had that kind of opportunity. [Editor's Note: Cornell University is located in Ithaca in Upstate New York.]

SI: During particularly high school but maybe even earlier, did you work after school or during the summers?

DM: I did. I got my first job when I was sixteen. You had to be sixteen in those days to get working papers. The summer I turned sixteen, which was '64, my uncle got me a job in Down Neck, Newark. This was a wonderful thing. He worked at the Dolly Madison Ice Cream

Company down in Newark, and across the street from the ice cream company was an electrical supply company. I don't know, he worked with my mother to get me a job as basically a gopher at this place in Down Neck, Newark. It was a long way from Vailsburg. It's about as far away from Vailsburg as you could get and still be at Newark. If you remember, I mentioned earlier about South Orange Avenue. The bus that went up and down South Orange Avenue was the 31 bus, and it went from the edge of South Orange, it didn't go into South Orange, but the last stop was South Orange. It would go down South Orange Avenue all the way through the Central Ward, become Market Street, go underneath the trains, and then come out on the far side--I don't know what the name of the street was, but it was basically a straight street--and then go into Down Neck, Newark. Only one bus would do that in the morning. There might have been ten or fifteen 31 buses. There was a 31E that went that way; it didn't stop at the train station. Most of them stopped at the train station. I know the various iterations of the 31 bus. The 32 bus, which only showed up once or twice in the morning, would make a left turn when it got to downtown Newark and take me to Rutgers, over by Washington Park. That was another kind of iteration of the 31, but this 31E went all the way down.

I had this job at what was then a cathode-ray tube accumulator and distributor. Andy and Laila, you may not have ever seen a radio that had tubes in it, and TVs had tubes in them. You'd take the back off and it might have ten or fifteen tubes, and you'd have to find the right one and then replace it if it went bad. That's the way we did electronics back then. This company didn't really manufacture tubes, but what they would do is they would aggregate them, so they were a wholesaler of tubes. I had a job there for two or three summers, and I ended up doing some interesting things there. It was kind of a great place to learn about business because the guy who--he didn't own it, but he ran it--he was a bit of a martinet. He was very strict, and then there were some guys who really made the place hum. They were a bunch of fun guys. [laughter] They would be playing baseball up in the stacks where they kept the tubes and doing all kinds of things, but they're the ones who really made the place work. Of course, there was a whole bunch of women doing menial tasks in the front office. There was an attractive secretary. So, it was really a great place. [laughter]

SI: Was that the only job you had before you went off to college?

DM: I had that job for I think three summers. Then, one summer, I was hired on to a company--I can barely remember it--I was hired on to a company as an assistant. It must have been when I was in college, but I had a Rutgers job that went year round. This is another story, but you haven't gotten to college, so I don't know if you're interested in hearing it. I'll tell you what that was.

SI: I can come back and ask about it later.

DM: Okay. I had a summer job with Rutgers that also had an impact on what I did years later.

SI: I am curious, growing up, as you got into your teen years in high school, how aware were you of the outside world, in terms of did you follow national and world events in the paper or on the radio or television? Would your family talk about news or politics or anything like that?

DM: My father was very much interested in politics. We'd watch the news every night, the New York news, mostly burning buildings. We'd watch the news every night, not so much the national news but the local news. We would sometimes talk about it, and my father had opinions. He was very happy and proud to be an American. He voted all the time.

Another vivid memory I have is--I mentioned the Alexander Street School. The Alexander Street School had a branch of the Newark Public Library attached to it, and I would walk to that branch of the library. They had two floors. The bottom floor was for younger kids, and the top floor was for adults. I remember very clearly--and you asked me if I was at all interested in politics--I remember very clearly checking out--I don't remember what grade I was in or anything like that--I remember checking out Richard Nixon's *Six Crises*, which was a big book in the early '60s, and reading the book because I've been a Republican all my life. My father was Republican, except for Hoover. Hoover was the reason he lost the six-family house. [laughter] But he only voted for Roosevelt twice, and he didn't think that more than two times was good; George Washington didn't do it. In any event, I remember taking out *Six Crises*. I was always interested in politics as a kid. I don't know why that is, maybe because my father was. Yes, the answer to that question is yes. [Editor's Note: *Six Crises* is a 1962 book by Richard Nixon that details his role in six major political situations. Nixon went on to serve as the President of the United States from 1969 to 1974. Herbert Hoover served as the U.S. president from 1929 to 1933. Hoover lost his reelection bid in 1932, amidst the Great Depression, to Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was elected four times to the presidency and served as president from 1933 until his death in office in 1945. George Washington set the precedent of the two-term presidency when he did not seek reelection for a third term. In 1947, the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, which limits presidents to two terms.]

SI: Another issue we look at is the impact of the Cold War. We have been reading books about how it seemed very prevalent in people's minds, but did it have any impact on your life? Was it something you talked about or something that affected your schooling or anything like that?

DM: No. I don't know whether I remember the drills, or I just remember the stories that other people told about the drills and picture them. The Cold War didn't necessarily have much of an impact. I may have not understood the Cold War at that point, in the early '60s. No, I'd have to say no. I get a little confused by the late '50s and early '60s actually because so much was happening in life in general. My ability to focus on particular times from, let's say, '58, when I was ten years old, to '65, I have trouble even knowing that I was in high school back then. [laughter] I don't know why.

SI: That is not unusual.

DM: It seems like it's all kind of compressed, when I look back on it.

SI: Yes. Do you both have any questions that you want to ask at this point? Andy, go ahead.

AZ: I was curious about the role that television played in your childhood.

DM: Yes, TV was very important. We had a TV for as long as I can remember. I'm probably six or eight in the late '50s, and the TV was always on, usually at dinner watching the news on a little tiny portable TV. TV was very important. I remember when Kennedy was shot. I remember watching the TV when the assassin was shot. [Editor's Note: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963 by Lee Harvey Oswald, who was arrested the same day. Two days later, when being transferred to the county jail, Oswald was shot and killed by nightclub owner Jack Ruby.]

SI: Oswald.

DM: Yes, Oswald. It was a very important part of who we were and what we did, yes, not so much the movies, but the news and that kind of stuff and, of course, regular TV. I can tell you that we watched *The Fugitive*, which was big, and *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Now, with all the channels on TV, you can still find those things. Some of them are very funny.

SI: Would you say, as you went to high school, that you were affected by any of the cultural changes, like changes in music or how people dressed?

DM: Music and dress, not so much. I think by high school, we became more involved in the civil rights issues. As I said, I don't know whether Vailsburg High School was created just because they needed the space or because it segregated out. My sisters had all gone to West Side High School, which was right on the other side of the Parkway and was becoming more and more integrated. So, I'm not sure, because I wasn't aware what Newark was doing at the time. This is more of a thought that I've had in recent years, not so much back then. I remember clearly there was some incident at the school, kind of after school, where there was a speaker, and it had something to do with integration and civil rights. It almost ended up in a mob scene, but luckily, it didn't. There was stuff going on. We knew about that, not so much world events, but more local stuff.

SI: You mentioned also you were in Explorer Scouts. What would you do with them?

DM: The Explorer Scouts, we had so much fun at Scouts, so we just wanted to continue once we got older. We'd always meet at the temple. There was a temple section of it, but it obviously had a big gym and we'd meet there. The fellow who ran the Scout troop, Bernie Verasub, a great guy, didn't run the Explorers. The Explorers were run by a couple of college kids, who were maybe three, four years older than we were. The way Explorers worked, at least back then, you had to find a focus. You had to find a single thing that you were, that you did, and we had a lot of trouble coming up with that. We were more interested in going on winter campouts and that kind of stuff. I don't know which one we started with, but we ended up with two different

focuses. One was space, which we didn't do much with. I don't remember. Really, it was just an excuse to meet every Wednesday night. The other was somebody decided we were going to do rifles or target shooting. We bought a couple of rifles, .22s, and there was a target place, a shooting place, I think out on Route 22 is where it was, in Union. We'd go out on Wednesday nights, and we'd shoot at the targets. That didn't last very long either, but I ended up keeping those rifles in my house for a while. I never felt very comfortable about it.

SI: You said you were also in the band, at least when you were in elementary school.

DM: My brother and I were in the band from grammar school right through to the end of high school. Actually, my last two years at Rutgers in Newark, they started a band, and I was in that. I was a mediocre, second-string clarinet player, but I loved the band.

SI: Why did you choose the clarinet?

DM: Because that's what my uncle had. [laughter] My Uncle Sal was a music teacher. My mother's family claimed to be very musical. In fact, everybody in my mother's family played something. My Uncle Sal played the trumpet. My Uncle Benny played the trumpet. My Uncle Carmine played the clarinet and the saxophone. My brother ended up with the trumpet, I ended up with the clarinet. Oh, I know why. You reminded me. I wanted to play some kind of a wind instrument, and I picked the clarinet, not so much the trumpet, because Dan was playing the trumpet, but they didn't have anything. All they had were violins. So, I ended up with a violin for a couple of months, which was awful, and I was not very happy about it, never particularly liked it. Then, of course, they ended up finding a clarinet, and I got the clarinet. Then, I ended up getting my own clarinet. I think the first clarinet I had is one of those metal ones, and then my uncle got me a regular black wood one. I don't know what they paid for it, but it wasn't much, I'm sure. We played in the grammar school band. I like to tell the story that I realized that when my daughters ended up playing in grammar school bands, and my younger daughter played the trumpet and my older daughter started with the clarinet, that was one of the most excruciating experiences for parents because it was just so bad. [laughter] We thought we were so good, but when you listen, as an adult, to a fifth-grade band or a fourth-grade band, you realize how much of a learning experience it actually is. Andy?

AZ: I want to ask what you loved about the band.

DM: What I loved about the band was, as I said, I was not a very good clarinet player--I was adequate but not very good--but I thought the band sounded great. The idea that I could be part of something that sounds so good, even though I'm not the greatest clarinet player, it teaches you something about organizations and how, sometimes, you need a whole group of folks in order to succeed. We did a lot of neat things. We marched in the Newark parades. I've got a great story about a Newark parade if anybody wants to hear that. We marched at football games. But we had nowhere to practice. As I said to you, in high school, we only had this shortened baseball field on macadam. All we could do was go up and back and turn it around. We couldn't do any side movements because we'd run into the fence, so we weren't really a disciplined marching

band. When my daughters went to school, their band was an excellent band, an award-winning band, and I still can't believe to this day how they could play and do the kinds of maneuvers they did. Obviously, it tells you something about what you can teach kids to do, because I can't believe I would have been able to do that.

SI: Let us talk a little bit about how you chose Rutgers, how the opportunity to go to college came about. Was that something that your parents had always been encouraging you to think about or pushing you towards?

DM: There was never any doubt in my brother's mind or my mind that we were going to go to college, which, looking back on it, is a little bit strange. None of my sisters went to college. Of course, they were a good bit older than we were. They all finished high school, and they then all went out to work and got married shortly thereafter, except for Gloria, who's still, as my father would say, an old maid and proud of it. There was no doubt that we were expected to go to college. I'm not sure why that is, but that's the way it was. None of my mother's family except for Uncle Sal, my Uncle Sal, went to college. So, that's the way it was.

When I applied, we had some guidance counselors who were nice folks, but you have to remember that they were new at it because they had been in the school when it was a junior high and really became guidance counselors shortly after it turned into a high school, but they gave us some good advice. I applied to a bunch of schools. I applied to Rutgers College, Rutgers-Newark, Fordham. I don't know whether I applied to Georgetown or not, but they encouraged me to apply to Princeton. They told me that they didn't expect I'd get in, but they wanted to get some applications to Princeton from the high school because it was a new high school, just to let them know that it existed, which I did. I didn't get in. I got into, I think, all of the others, Seton Hall. I don't know whether it was Fordham or Georgetown or whatever, but I remember talking to my father about it. This is another story altogether, but in my mind, I always knew I was going to law school. My father said to me, "Look, if you say you're going to go to law school, then you're going to go to Rutgers in Newark for college because that's what we can afford. That way you'll have some money left to go where you need to go for law school." So, that's how I ended up at Rutgers in Newark.

SI: What interested you in going to law school?

DM: I keep thinking about that, and I'm not sure. I knew from when I was very young that I wanted to go to law school. There's a lot of guys that I met, and gals, in law school that knew when they were young. Obviously, a whole bunch of other folks had stumbled into it. I don't know why. When I think about it, my father respected priests and doctors and lawyers. He used a couple of lawyers himself. There were a couple of lawyers in his club. He was very active in an Italian-American club, and he always treated them with great respect. I think that's probably how that happened. I look back on it, and I say, "Gosh, how silly I was that this was just going to happen," but it did and so that's the way it is.

SI: You lived at home during your time at Rutgers-Newark.

DM: Yes, I stayed at home the whole time.

SI: Tell us a little bit about your first few months at college. What stands out? Was it much of a transition for you?

DM: Oh, absolutely. It clearly was. I have two stories that I remember from the very first days of class. Back then, Rutgers had no real buildings. There were no Rutgers-built buildings. They were working on the campus center building. I forget the name of it now; that's terrible.

[Editor's Note: The student center at Rutgers-Newark is named the Paul Robeson Campus Center.] In any event, they were just building that. Then, that was the first of the buildings, and the library and then Conklin and Boyden [Halls], they were all built while I was there. We were spread out across downtown Newark in old insurance company buildings, in old gyms, and in an old this and old that. You got your classes, and they'd be in all these different places. You had to make your way to the buildings, some of which were down by the river. By McCarter Highway, there was an old brewery; that was the library. They claimed that you could smell the hops on a hot summer's day. I'm not so sure; I didn't know that much about hops at the time. In any event, you'd have to go down there. That's where the labs were if you had a science class, and some of the classes were in other buildings across Washington Park.

I remember, I went downtown to the bookstore, I bought all my books, and I remember western civ [civilization] was at least this thick [three inches]. It was a huge book. My first day of school, I had the three classes, four classes, whatever it was. I brought every book and my notebooks and all that, and it was a huge stack of books like this that I carried around with me all day. Nobody else was carrying books around. [laughter] It took me a week or so to figure out that I didn't need to carry the books with me to every class. So, that was kind of interesting.

The other thing that's interesting--and this comes back to the story I was going to tell earlier--is I got a state scholarship. It was 250 dollars a semester when I started, and I got a state scholarship for five hundred dollars at least for two years and then they said my father made too much money. I find that hard to believe, but that was the case. I also needed some money. So, I applied for--it must have been during the summer--I applied for work-study. Work-study back then was you would work either in the library or with a particular professor, and you got paid. I think it was either sixty-five cents an hour, or a dollar sixty-five an hour, or something like that. So, they sent me this sheet of paper that said, "You have an appointment with Professor Hubert Schmidt on Halsey Street." It was like the second day or the third day that I was in school. Of course, I was terrified by anybody in authority when I was young, and of course, going to see a professor was terrifying. So, I found it. It was an old brownstone. They had the profs back then in these beautiful brownstone buildings on Halsey Street, and he was there along with Theodore Thayer. They were history professors. So, I made my way there, and I met Hubert Schmidt. Hubert Schmidt was a history professor, an older man. He was in his sixties back then, and he had written a book called *Rural Hunterdon*. I think it was his doctoral thesis from the 1940s or '30s. He was from Chicago. I think he went to the University of Chicago. He was the nicest person you wanted to meet and had a bit of a twinkle in his eye as well, but of course, back then,

I was still not sure what would happen. I started working for him. [Editor's Note: Hubert G. Schmidt was a professor of history at Rutgers who passed away in 1980 at the age of seventy-five. He specialized in the history of New Jersey. Schmidt wrote *Rural Hunterdon: An Agricultural History*, published by Rutgers University Press in 1945. Theodore Thayer served as a history professor at Rutgers-Newark from 1947 to 1974.]

I would show up at his office, trying to get twenty hours a week in--that was the maximum, twenty hours a week--because I needed the money. I would catalog his books, I'd keep his bookshelves [organized], and over the course of time, one of the things I did was--he wrote an article for the *Hunterdon County Democrat*, which is a local newspaper, a weekly, here in Hunterdon County. Now, I had no idea where Hunterdon County was and I really didn't care, but I would type up these articles, which he had written in the '50s and was now recycling and editing them and marking them up. That's what they wanted, and that's what he did. So, I would type them up and mail them in for him. That was one of my many jobs. Well, I ended up--and this comes back to the question you asked before--I ended up working four years for Hubert Schmidt. Now, I don't remember anybody else who was on work-study that I knew that stayed with somebody for four years. In the summer, I would work forty hours a week. I would type up his books, including one called *Agriculture in New Jersey*, which included a chapter on fertilizers but mostly manure and manure shipped up from South America, guano, or whatever they called it. [laughter] So, I would type up the books. I bought a Smith Corona electric typewriter and I had that at home, and that's what I would [use]. I worked at home--I was ahead of my time--during the summer. [Editor's Note: *Agriculture in New Jersey: A Three Hundred Year History* by Hubert G. Schmidt was published by Rutgers University Press in 1973.]

Occasionally, I would drive out to his farm. He had a farm out in--not Hunterdon County--but right on the border of Somerset, I guess, and Hunterdon County [Middlesex County]. He had this big farm. He lived there with his wife, who was a German woman--born in Germany, raised in Germany--that he met after the war when he went over with the Marshall Plan. Her husband was a German officer, had been killed in the war, and so he married her and she came to the United States with her daughter. They lived out in Franklin Township. One of the things I didn't mention about Mrs. Pollack, from the Cub Scout story--but it's also true for Hubert Schmidt--I ended up writing their wills and executing their wills for both of them. I always thought that was fun and interesting. Hubert Schmidt was a great guy, and he taught me a lot. [Editor's Note: In 1948, Secretary of State George Marshall initiated a twelve-billion-dollar plan to rebuild and stabilize Western European nations in the post-World War II period. This became known as the Marshall Plan.]

SI: You became a political science major. Do any professors from that department stand out?

DM: Oh, absolutely, most of them. [laughter] They were all good. Norm Samuels, who became the dean or was the chancellor, I think, at one point, of the Newark campus. I was in, I think, his first class at Rutgers as a political science major. He was just very young back then. It was 1965, '66, maybe '66. He was a terrific teacher. He was great and a terrific person, and I appreciated that years later. Long after I graduated, I would be able to go back and occasionally

run into him at this event or that event. He was terrific. There was a teacher called Taras Hundzack, who I never had, but he was the chairman of the History Department, not the Political Science Department, and he was terrific. Of course, Miller, I forget his first name, but he was the chair of the Political Science Department. He was also very good, and there were others. I can picture them all, but Norm Samuels stands out and Miller stands out. I took a good number of history courses. I took some economics courses as well. I think I had a minor in economics, and there was one--I can't remember his name--but one economics professor especially who was very good, Cummings or Cunningham or something like that. [Editor's Note: Norman Samuels is a Professor of Political Science and Provost Emeritus at Rutgers-Newark. He joined the faculty in 1967. From 1982 to 2002, Samuels served as the Provost of Rutgers-Newark. Kenneth E. Miller taught in the Political Science Department at Rutgers-Newark from 1955 to 1993. He served as the first chair of the department and also as the first dean of the Rutgers-Newark graduate school.]

SI: As you went on in your time at Rutgers, did you get involved in any clubs or activities or anything like that?

DM: Yes, I was very active. I founded the Young Republicans, which was a lot of fun. We were very active. That's where I first met Tom Kean. We brought gubernatorial candidates to the campus, and I worked on Tom Kean's first campaign for the Assembly. Al Felzenberg, who was one or two years behind me, was a member of the Republican Club, and he and I met Tom Kean at Newark Airport at the old Newarker restaurant, which was part of the old--what do they call it--the North Terminal. I ended up in the Kean Administration, so did Al, twenty years later, and then Al ended up being the secretary of the 9/11 Commission when Kean was appointed there, and then he wrote a biography of Tom Kean. I think Rutgers Press might have printed that one. I have it here somewhere. He recounts the time he and I met Tom Kean at Newark Airport, which I kind of found interesting because I had almost forgotten it. [Editor's Note: Thomas Kean first won election to the New Jersey General Assembly in 1967 and served in the Assembly until 1978. He served as the Governor of New Jersey from 1982 to 1990 and later chaired the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, widely known as the 9/11 Commission, from 2002 to 2004. Alvin Felzenberg, who served as a spokesperson for the 9/11 Commission, is an author, historian and university professor. Felzenberg previously served as Assistant Secretary of State of New Jersey (1982-1989) in the administration of Kean. He authored *Governor Tom Kean: From the New Jersey Statehouse to the 9/11 Commission* (Rutgers University Press, 2006). From 1982 to 1985, Dominick Mazzagetti served as the Deputy and Acting Commissioner of Banking in the Kean Administration.]

I was in the Young Republicans. I was involved in a number of other clubs, I think. I can't remember them quite as well. I was also involved, although I was never an elected member, [in] the student government. I was involved in some of the pro-Newark campus, anti-New Brunswick campus agitation that took place--I don't know whether it was '67-'68, '68-'69. We closed down the campus for a day or two. We marched up to New Brunswick. We gave speeches demanding that Newark get an equal share of the money that was going to Rutgers University, Rutgers College mostly, and Douglass. So, I was involved in that. I was not

involved in any of the BOS, the Black Organization of [Students], shutdowns. [Editor's Note: On February 24, 1969, members of the Black Organization of Students (BOS) took over Conklin Hall, one of the main classroom buildings at Rutgers-Newark, to protest the lack of minority students and faculty on campus. The takeover lasted for seventy-two hours.]

I also wrote for the newspaper. I wrote a column for the newspaper, a political column. In fact, there's another funny story. It was a political column. I was writing the Republican side, and a fellow named Bob Russo, who ended up being mayor of Montclair years later, was writing the Democratic side. After I wrote my last book on the Jersey Shore, I was down in Asbury Park giving a seminar, giving a talk on the book, and Bob Russo, who now lives down there or has a place down there, contacted me. I hadn't talked to Bob in thirty years, and we got together at McLoone's down in Asbury Park. He and his wife and me and my wife had dinner, spent a couple hours together, and talked about old times. He brought prints, photocopies, of some of the old articles that he had written and I had written for the newspaper back then. That's how I was involved with Rutgers back then. [Editor's Note: Robert J. Russo served as the Mayor of Montclair from 2000 to 2004.]

SI: Do you remember any of the issues that you would cover on both sides in the column?

DM: Do you mean in the articles?

SI: Yes.

DM: It was all partisan stuff back then, and I can't really remember the particulars. This was also the period of the Newark riots. The riots were going on. So, we had that one summer, and we had agitation over Newark funding, as I mentioned. We had agitation over the Black Organization of Students. We had agitation over the Vietnam War. All of that was going on, and so it's hard to separate it all out and say, "Oh, I was writing about this," or, "I was writing about that." It was all wrapped up, and I used to say--I don't say anymore--that, "Politics today is very partisan. It's very nasty." I said, "Well, you weren't here in the '60s when we had riots and all kinds of things going on." Now, I don't say that anymore because I'm not so sure it was any worse. I'm not sure if it's worse now than it was then. It was pretty bad back then. [Editor's Note: The Newark riots lasted from July 12 to July 17, 1967. The social unrest began after the police arrested an African American cab driver, and rumors spread that he had been killed in custody. The riots resulted in over two dozen deaths, over seven hundred injuries, fifteen hundred arrests and property damage exceeding ten million dollars.]

SI: I was going to ask about the riots and their impact. What do you remember about those days and its impact on Rutgers-Newark and the city for the rest of your time there?

DM: It clearly had an impact on everybody. The riots, of course, were in the summer. Unless you were taking classes in the summer, it didn't impact you, although I foolishly drove down with my brother to see what was going on, which was a dumb thing to do. You couldn't get away from that. Of course, being in Newark and being in the white sections of Newark, there

were strong feelings back then. It's hard to recognize some of that today, but there were very strong feelings in the neighborhoods about what was happening to Newark. My father, for example, thought Newark was one of the greatest places in the world to live and to raise a family. He was obviously upset about what was going on in Newark. Those things did have an impact; there's no doubt about it. Go ahead.

AZ: Do you remember how the media covered the riots?

DM: I can't say I do. This I can say: the riots were covered differently than the riots are being covered today, but exactly how I don't particularly recall. Back then, we used to read the *Newark Evening News*. That eventually went out of business and everybody moved over to *The Ledger*, but the *Newark Evening News* was considered the better paper at the time. It was an evening paper. *The Ledger* was a morning paper. I remember seeing the headlines and I remember the coverage, but I can't say that I remember which side they were on or whether they were on a side. I do know that everybody in Newark had a very strong opinion about what was going on, one way or the other, on either side.

SI: You had family still in more of the heart of the city.

DM: Not by then.

SI: Not by then? Oh, okay. Yes, I was going to ask if they were part of the area that Anthony Imperiale was in. [Editor's Note: Anthony Imperiale was a politician and outspoken opponent of busing to enforce desegregation in Newark. During the riots of 1967, he advocated armed action by white Newark residents in the North Ward. He was elected to the Newark City Council in 1969 and the New Jersey General Assembly in 1971.]

DM: No, I didn't have any relatives in the North Ward, which is kind of odd.

SI: Okay.

DM: None of my father's family or my mother's family were North Ward. It must have been a different migration or maybe they came from a different province of Italy in the North Ward. We were the only ones left in Newark by the riots, '67-'68. Most everybody else had moved out, and maybe my Aunt Tess would have been the only one.

SI: Did you see an impact on the Rutgers campus though? Were there changes in demographics, or did the BOS become more active afterwards?

DM: Clearly, there was an impact. The University went out of its way to try to address the issues that were raised. Malcolm--what was his name? He was the chancellor at the time, or the president. [Editor's Note: Malcolm Talbott served as the vice president of Rutgers-Newark from 1963 to 1974.]

SI: Talbott.

DM: Talbott, yes. He ran the Newark campus. He was very much concerned, I know that, about making the campus more diverse. Now, what was considered more diverse in the 1960s and today is two different things, but, yes, obviously, there were strides being made. They were clearly trying to make some changes. Yes, I was at a Rutgers event yesterday, and someone mentioned that it was only 1971 [1972] that they admitted women to Rutgers College. This is where I'd say it was so much compressed in this period of time. All these different things were happening, and we all think of it as kind of this linear progression. It just wasn't a linear progression. It was a lot of different things going on at the same time, layered on top of each other. [Editor's Note: Rutgers College, which had been all-male since its founding in 1766, began enrolling women in 1972. The first four-year coed class at Rutgers College graduated in 1976.]

SI: Do you recall if a good number of your classmates were women?

DM: Oh, yes. Oh, absolutely. We had the nursing school. At that time, it was attached to Newark, and there was a pharmacy school attached to Newark. Yes, there were a lot of women. It was different in law school, but in undergraduate, there were women.

SI: Laila.

LA: In political science, was it mostly men?

DM: It was mostly men. I would have to say most of the professors, a larger percentage of the professors, were men than women in all the classes. I remember I had two particular women professors, assistant professors or whatever, at the time. One I did some individual study with as a senior, and the other, I forget, I think it was international politics. So, we had a couple, not like it is today, obviously.

SI: During this whole time, of course, there was the Vietnam War going on. To start, in general, what did you think about U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and how did it impact your life? Were you worried about the draft, that sort of thing?

DM: Oh, yes, clearly. Yes, I was a conservative Republican. Back then, there was no conservative or liberal--it's either Republican or Democrat--but I was a Republican. I was a Nixon supporter, and I can't deny that. I thought that the Vietnam War was a mess and I didn't think it was being handled properly, but then everybody thought it was a mess. They just differed on how it should have been handled. Obviously, there was no clear way to get out of that. It had an impact, for sure, on everybody, and it kind of came to a head the year I graduated, in '69, when all the issues with the draft were coming to the fore. Once you lost your deferment, which I think was a 2-A, they called it, you became 1-A, and we all had to go down to downtown Newark for our physicals. There we all were, all the guys. Everybody we went to high school with who graduated that June were there in, I guess it was, September or August, standing in

their shorts on line to get their physical. We all knew about it, and everybody was trying to figure out what they were going to do. [Editor's Note: In Selective Service classifications, 2-A stood for "Registrant deferred because of civilian non-agricultural occupation." 1-A meant "Available for military service." A student deferment was 2-S.]

My brother--of course, we graduated at the same time--joined the National Guard in Westfield, I think, and put in whatever you put in, four years, there. I was going off to law school. There were no deferments for law school. I think one of the smartest things that Nixon ever did was he made the draft understandable. Before '69, you didn't know if you were going to be drafted or not. All you knew was you were 1-A. When Nixon put the lottery in place, which was the fall of '69, then you knew exactly where you stood, and you could at least then make some decisions, like joining the National Guard or whatever else there was. So, I can tell you that I was in law school that fall. We were all first-year students. We were all 1-A, and we were all sitting by the radio listening to the pull of the draft numbers. They would pull out birthdays, "Number one, number two, number three." I was 305 or 309. It became clear I was not going to be drafted. The next day, everybody who was one to 150--this was at Cornell now--they all went up to the Cornell ROTC office and they all signed up. They all put in their time after we got out of law school. So, that's how it affected us. I was incredibly lucky; so were a bunch of other folks. [Editor's Note: On December 1, 1969, the Selective Service held its first draft lottery to determine the draft order for 1970. 366 capsules, each possessing a date of the year, were drawn, and if one's date of birth was drawn early, they possessed a low draft number, which increased the chances of being drafted.]

SI: There were protests on the campuses, the Newark campus, as well as probably in the city as well. Would you be aware of them, or would the Republican Club try to do any kind of counterprotest, that sort of thing?

DM: What kind of protests are you talking about?

SI: A counterprotest.

DM: No. We didn't run any counterprotests.

SI: Okay.

DM: We would run programs at the campus center. We'd bring in movies, some of which were embarrassing, because we had no idea what the movies were about when we were signing up for them. No, I don't recall running any counterprotests. What we did, as Young Republicans, was much more practical. We found out who the Republican candidates were in the general area, like Tom Kean, and Kaltenbacher was another, and Jim--Jack--[I] forget his name. He ran for the Senate, he was a West Point guy, and we helped their campaigns. That's what we did. Then, I guess the next year, or maybe when I was a junior, there was a big Republican primary for governor. We brought in like five of the seven candidates for a conference. We did that kind of stuff. We didn't do a protest, not that I can recall anyway. It was an active group actually.

[Editor's Note: Philip Kaltenbacher served in the New Jersey General Assembly (1968-1974) with Tom Kean, his running mate from Essex County. After Kean was elected governor of New Jersey, he named Kaltenbacher as the chair of the New Jersey Republican State Committee. James Wallwork, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1964 to 1966 and New Jersey Senate from 1968 to 1982.]

SI: Was there also a Young Americans for Freedom chapter? [Editor's Note: Young Americans for Freedom is a conservative youth organization that was established in 1960.]

DM: Yes, there was. There was, yes. Some of our guys overlapped but not many. I was not in that. Some of those guys were a little bit out there but not all of them.

SI: Were you aware if there was an SDS? [Editor's Note: Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was a radical student group with chapters on college and university campuses across the nation.]

DM: Oh, absolutely. [laughter]

SI: Yes.

DM: Absolutely. I was just looking at the yearbook in anticipation of this discussion. There was an outfit called S-O-M-E. I think it was Society for Opening Mind Expansion. You should take a look at the picture. It's really something. There was some kind of SDS. I don't know whether it was an actual chapter of the SDS, but, yes, we had that. There's no question about it. I remember one day, for some reason--I forget what it was--somebody started a bonfire right outside the library up on the concrete plaza there, and they were throwing books in there. We didn't do that. Republicans don't do that. [laughter] We're too conservative.

SI: It sounds like you had an early exposure to a lot of different Republican politicians. Was there anything in particular that drew you to Tom Kean at that time?

DM: It was two things, I would say. First, he had a small part of Newark in his district at the time, because we're going back to districts. I think this even goes back before the "one man, one vote" rule, where back then, the counties only had a singular senator. I forget what year that changed, but I think it was subsequently. He agreed to meet with me and Al Felzenberg. I don't know, I must have called him or called his office, and we met him down at the Newark Airport. He was the nicest guy in the world and very bright, and so both Al and I hung on to him for years. So, we were involved. That's how we got involved. What else did you ask me there? There was some other piece. [Editor's Note: In 1965, the New Jersey Supreme Court, in a decision written by Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub, held that New Jersey's single-seat county apportionment was unconstitutional and forbade further legislative elections under the system at the time. The New Jersey Supreme Court's ruling followed the principle of "one man, one vote" of legislative bodies established by the U.S. Supreme Court in the cases *Baker v. Carr* (1962), *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964) and *Westbury v. Sanders* (1964). As a result, redistricting took place in

New Jersey, changing the system from each county electing one senator to an increase in representation for more populous counties. Prior to 1965, the New Jersey State Senate was comprised of twenty-one senators, one from each county. In 1965, the Senate was increased to twenty-nine senators, with more populous counties given multiple seats and smaller counties sharing one or more senators.]

SI: What attracted you about his policies, or was it more just the person?

DM: Oh, I know what I was going to say. He was interested in talking to us and bringing us into the campaign, and so we were involved. We got involved, and that's what politics is all about. You find somebody you like, that you think is smart, and if he or she is willing to bring you on, you get involved. If you like politics and you want to move along, it seems easy, but it's not that easy. You've got to find somebody who can win a primary and then win a general election in the statewide elections. Tom Kean lost his first two primaries, and we were involved in a number of those campaigns. Eventually, he won the primary and he won the general election, and he only won by three thousand votes. They said that this election was close. I was involved in the recount on that election. Long before the Bush-Gore recount, we were counting chads up in Warren County. [Editor's Note: Tom Kean lost in 1974 to Millicent Fenwick for the Republican nomination for Congress (fifth congressional district) and in 1977 against Raymond Bateman for the Republican nomination for governor. In the 1981 New Jersey gubernatorial election, Tom Kean defeated Democratic candidate Jim Florio by 1,797 votes. In the U.S. presidential election of 2000, George W. Bush defeated Al Gore despite losing the popular vote. After the Florida Supreme Court ordered a statewide manual recount, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a controversial 5-4 decision in *Bush v. Gore* to reverse the Florida Supreme Court's recount order, effectively awarding the presidency to Bush. At issue in the recount were "hanging chads" or incompletely punched paper ballots.]

You get involved in politics, and a lot of it, again, is luck. You've got to find somebody who's going to be a winner eventually, maybe not the first time or the second time. Tom Kean lost against Millicent Fenwick for Congress in the primary, and then he lost against Bateman in the Republican primary for governor in '77. I wasn't involved in the first campaign--I was off in law school--but his second campaign, I was involved and we lost. Then, he won in '81 and then won the general election in '81.

SI: At that time, in the late '60s and early '70s, were there any other Republican figures that you gravitated towards?

DM: I was a big Nixon fan. Nobody likes to admit those things anymore, but that's just fact. I liked Nixon. I thought he was incredibly bright. I still think he was incredibly bright. He was also incredibly stupid on some things, and I think he knew that in the end. Going back to *Six Crises*, I was a Nixon supporter. I supported Tom Kean and probably worked on a number of other campaigns. I can't remember which ones. Of course, a lot of the campaigns you work on are local campaigns. Not everything is presidential or gubernatorial, and a lot of times, the

others have more of an impact. I was very involved in Morris County politics, but that was after I got married and was working.

SI: Before we talk about Cornell, do you students have any questions about Rutgers-Newark? Yes, Andy, go ahead.

AZ: Do you remember if you read in *The Targum* at the time, there was some discussion about moving the main campus to Rutgers-Newark?

DM: I'll answer the second part of that first. No, I never remember any discussion about moving the main campus to Newark. We never read *The Targum*. *Targum* wasn't published in Newark. We read the weekly *Observer*, which was a much weaker counterpart. No, I [don't] remember that discussion at all. There were a lot of things going on, again, in Newark at the time. There was a big campaign to move the medical school or the hospital to Central Ward, Newark; that's what I remember. I forget where it was or where they were moving from. There was an awful lot of talk about that, but I don't remember Rutgers ever talking about moving but could be. [Editor's Note: This refers to the controversy and subsequent compromise in 1968 to establish what later become known as the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) and University Hospital in Newark.]

SI: Maybe it was the main campus of the medical school.

DM: That might have been what it was. Of course, now, it's finally come full circle, and Rutgers is now tied into that school. [Editor's Note: In 2013, Rutgers merged with UMDNJ and formed Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), which includes two medical schools, New Jersey Medical School and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.]

SI: You said you always wanted to go to law school. How did that process unfold in your junior and senior years, and what led you to Cornell?

DM: Again, it's kind of interesting because it happened so seamlessly. The dean of Rutgers Law School used to run an annual seminar for undergraduates who wanted to go to law school, and it was at what was the old, old law school building, which was new at the time, [laughter] brand new. I would go to those, and he would talk about applying to law school and going to law school. There were two or three guys, good friends of mine, who were also applying to law school at the same time, my good friend Ed, who was a history major, and myself, and one or two others, and of course, there were others. Actually, Jerry Baranoff was another. He and I both ended up at Cornell, and actually, he had gone to high school with Ed, so that's another story altogether. We went around taking the LSATs and then applying. We took the LSATs at night. We both did very well, better than what I would have anticipated my doing. We applied to a bunch of the same schools. We both applied to Cornell. We both applied to Penn. Of course, we both applied to Rutgers. I think I applied to Georgetown and Fordham, and Ed might have applied to one or two other places. Then, Ed and I went together, we went to see Penn in

Philadelphia. I didn't particularly like Philadelphia, still don't particularly like Philadelphia. [laughter] It's a Jersey chauvinism, I think. Then, we drove up to Cornell.

Driving up to Cornell, it was like, "Holy cow, there's open spaces up here. This is an interesting place," and I was really impressed by the campus. It's really a beautiful campus. I always forget, there was another reason I liked Cornell, and that is that they had, at that time, a dual program where you could apply for the law school, and you could apply for either an MBA [Master of Business Administration] or a Master's in Public Administration, an MPA. Now, back then, an MBA was not necessarily as big a deal as it is today. You didn't have all these guys making billions of dollars because they went to MBA school. I was very interested in government, obviously, and so I said, "This is right up my alley." So, I applied to the MPA school, and I got in. That added another piece to going to Cornell.

Now, it turns out--just to finish the story--the first year was scheduled at the administration school, and then the second year at the law school. The third year was kind of mixed. Because I always wanted to be a lawyer, I wanted to do it the other way around. I wanted to do the first year at the law school, which is what I did, and then I dropped out of the MPA. I was enjoying law school quite a bit and did not want to make changes, although I did end up taking some extra courses there as extra courses while I was at Cornell. So, I did get a little taste of it.

Ed went to Penn. Jerry Baranoff went to Cornell, and Ira Goldberg, I think it was, went to Penn. So, there was a number of us who went to good schools, and of course, a good number of them went to Rutgers, which is also a good school.

SI: What was that first year like? I always hear that the first year is the most difficult of law school. What was the adjustment like? What were the classes like?

DM: Oh, it was awful. [laughter] It was just like it was always described; I don't know if they've changed it much now. It was a very difficult first year. My daughter ended up going to Cornell Law, too, and she would call me during the first year and she would cry on the phone. I said, "Wait, wait, I did my own crying. I don't need your crying." [laughter] The first year law school is kind of tough, but I really enjoyed Cornell. I really enjoyed law school, and I was involved in a bunch of things. I met a good group of guys, not so many girls--there were very few women in our class--and we still have stayed close. So, that's been very good. The first year was tough.

SI: What was it that you found interesting that kept you going?

DM: I've always enjoyed the law. I never particularly enjoyed the practice, but I've always enjoyed the law and how it made you think and how it makes you think in a certain way. Yes, I just found it very interesting. The law and the professors were fascinating. They were really wonderful. Just being around everybody else, sometimes in your life, whether it's a campaign, or it's a show, or whatever it is, you get involved in a small group setting where everybody is focused on the same thing. You're all trying to help each other and help yourself. You get

through it and have some fun, and that's kind of the way I saw law school. We had a good group of ten, twelve, fifteen people that hung together, and we were all in the same classes, taking the same stuff, talking about the same thing, you talked, you ate, slept, and drank it. That's just the way it was in law school, very different from undergraduate.

SI: I see later on in your career you got involved in banking and corporate law. Was that a focus then, or was that something you developed later?

DM: That had never been my intention. My intention was to practice law and get in government. That was always my intention, not necessarily to become a businessman or a banker, but you never know. That's what life's all about. I ended up in the Kean Administration in the Department of Banking, the mid-high level of the Department of Banking, and of course, that then took me off in that direction. Then, I kind of bounced back and forth, which turns out, for me, that was probably a very good thing. I tend to become too settled and then get bored, so moving from spot to spot over the course of fifty years helped me stay interested and made it a lot more fun. I ended up meeting a lot more different people than I would otherwise have, but the law was always a mainstay. The training was always a mainstay. It was always something that trained you in a certain way so that you can do some of these other things, even though you didn't know anything about them. [laughter]

SI: What would you say were the biggest challenges in law school for you?

DM: For me, part of it was being away from home. That was part of it. It was a competition, was another, very competitive. Not that I'm not competitive, but it was very competitive. I would say those are the two main issues, yes.

LA: Was there a type of law that you wanted to pursue at first?

DM: Not necessarily. I knew I was not cut out for criminal law or plaintiff's work. I was too conservative to be a plaintiff's attorney. Probably corporate law. Personally, I liked banking. I had taken a number of economics courses, and so that doesn't come as a surprise that I was interested in the corporate end of it. Cornell Law sends a lot of people to big New York firms where they do corporate work, and now it's all different things. It's labor law, and it's international--they have a big international program, international law--but it's all corporate work. It's not necessarily trial work and not necessarily plaintiff's work. It's mostly on the corporate side.

SI: You said you got involved in some activities there. What activities did that include, *Law Review*, Moot Court, anything like that?

DM: Yes, I was on both the *Law Review* and the Moot Court Board. That was a little bit unusual to be in both, but I was. I had an article published while I was in law school on taxes, believe it or not. It was a very . . .

SI: I think you moved away from the microphone. Can you repeat that last part?

DM: I said it was a rather arcane subject. I tried to make it a little more interesting, but they cut those parts. [laughter] *Law Review* was difficult, but it was interesting. That was probably my first time to get involved in writing, which has kind of followed me around most of my career. The Moot Court Board, I wasn't as good at Moot Court as I probably was at *Law Review*, but, again, it got me up and speaking and that's what it's supposed to do. It's supposed to teach you to present yourself the right way and to handle tough questions and that kind of thing. Other than that, you didn't have Republican clubs and that kind of thing in law school, so there wasn't much else. I was involved in a quarterly pamphlet or magazine that was put out by the students; I was involved in that.

SI: Just going back to Rutgers-Newark ...

DM: I was also on the Cornell University Traffic and Parking Commission. [laughter] Kind of dumb, but that was interesting.

SI: That is a big job here at Rutgers.

DM: I'll bet.

SI: I wanted to step back to Rutgers-Newark for a moment.

DM: Sure.

SI: You had talked earlier about how in the last two years, there was a band that you were a part of.

DM: Yes, yes.

SI: Was it a marching band?

DM: No, no, no, it was a concert band.

SI: What would you do with them, where would you play, that sort of thing?

DM: All I remember was it was somewhere on Washington Street. I forget what building it was in. It was the second floor. It was a big open space, and we had maybe thirty players all in. I really don't remember it all that well. In fact, I have to really think about it. I remember seeing--it must have been in *The Observer* or somewhere else, maybe it was on a bulletin board--that they were trying to start a concert band, and I thought, "Oh, well, why not? I can do that." It was a Thursday afternoon or a Friday afternoon for a couple of hours once a week, and I assume we gave concerts. I think we did. It was only the two years, actually, the first year we were just getting organized and the second year. I don't think it's still there.

SI: Did you have much time for a social life at Rutgers-Newark or Cornell?

DM: In Newark, I did date. [laughter] That was about it, and I went out with my brother. My brother was at Seton Hall, and we would go out with him and Lou from the Cub Scout den and a couple of other fellows. We had cars, or my brother had a car. My brother and I shared a car, I guess, for a short while. There was an occasional mixer somewhere in downtown Newark. They were fairly well attended but not much going on there. Yes, I wasn't involved with any fraternities or anything like that.

SI: There were fraternities in Newark at that time, right?

DM: Oh, yes, there were.

SI: Okay.

DM: Not so much live-in at the time but just groups of guys, and some sororities.

SI: You mentioned that at Cornell you clerked at a law firm during the summers.

DM: Yes, I guess the first two summers.

SI: Was that a firm in Newark?

DM: It was a firm in Newark. Shanley and Fisher was the name of it. I think it's still there. I'm not sure; they might have merged with someone else. It was a big corporate firm, and that was interesting. That's, as I said, the first time I ever got on a plane. I was in the library, and there were three of us. Somebody said, "Who's available to go somewhere tomorrow?" and I raised my hand. They said, "Okay. Here, you've got to deliver this package to Washington, D.C. tomorrow. You get on a plane at six o'clock." I said, "Wait a minute. I've never been on a plane." "Well, if you're going to do this, you've got to go." "Okay." That's the first time I ever went to the airport, other than to meet Tom Kean. Yes, they were a good firm. They were a lot of fun. [Editor's Note: In 1999, Shanley and Fisher merged with the Philadelphia law firm Drinker-Biddle, which now operates under the name Drinker, Biddle and Reath.]

SI: It may not apply, but I know earlier there was a prejudice against Jewish and Italian law students either in law school or firms they could or could not be employed at. Was there any of that by your time?

DM: No, if it was during my time, it was at the far edge of my time. By the time I was coming through, there might have been some firms that I wouldn't have seen, but I interviewed with a good number of firms and had a variety of possibilities. It didn't seem to impact me. There were firms in Newark that were known as Jewish firms or Irish firms, but that doesn't mean they didn't have the opposite. Everybody was mixed, but the original founders and their client base might

have been more one way or the other. It was never an issue. Maybe I was just naïve, but I never saw it as an issue.

SI: We are coming up on noon. Andy and Laila, do you have any other questions you want to ask, either about what we are up to now or anything that we skipped over?

AZ: I am curious what it was like during the election of 1968 between Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey.

DM: If you have the time, I'll tell you a quick story about the 1968 election. I was a kid, obviously--well, I guess twenty--and I was involved with Nixon in the primary. There was a primary or were primaries back then, and I forget who were the main candidates against him, except that Henry Cabot Lodge was one of the possibilities. He was a senator from Massachusetts. I remember I used to work, on a fairly regular basis, not for money, I'd go up to some storefront in Union somewhere, on one of the main streets in Union, and we would work in there sending out flyers and sending out solicitations and that kind of stuff. In any event, there was a June primary in New Jersey, and nobody was on the ballot in New Jersey at the time. It was decided, very hush, hush, by the people running the campaign, that we would run a write-in campaign for Nixon in the primary with the intention of getting a huge write-in, huge in the sense of much larger than any other write-in candidate had ever gotten, for Nixon, and that would blow Henry Cabot Lodge out of the race some way or another. So, we did this. We put a lot of time and effort into it and wrote to people, called people, sent the people letters, saying, "This is what we're going to do. Keep it all hush hush. Don't tell anybody because it's supposed to be a spontaneous explosion for Nixon." We had all kinds of issues about how it was impossible for a lefthanded person to do a write-in in New Jersey because the write-in slot, you had to lift the slot up and write it in the slot, or go in the other way, I forget what it was. In any event, come election night, Nixon got five times, ten times the votes that anyone had ever gotten in the New Jersey primary, and of course, Henry Cabot Lodge didn't get any. That was the night that Bobby Kennedy was shot in California, same night, second Tuesday in June 1968, and we got no coverage at all, obviously, and for good reason. It just shows you how odd politics can be at times. [Editor's Note: Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. was a politician and diplomat who served in the U.S. Senate from 1937 to 1944 and from 1947 to 1953. Primary elections in New Jersey in 1968 took place on June 4. Robert F. Kennedy was shot on June 5, 1968 at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California, where he was delivering a victory speech after winning the Democratic primary. He died the next day.]

SI: Thank you very much. If you do not mind, I would like to reach out to you and set up another appointment for covering more of your later career.

DM: Okay, I hope I didn't wander too much.

SI: No, this was great. This is exactly what we wanted, and I appreciate you answering all of our questions. I think it has been very good for Andy and Layla. We try to get all different

perspectives, all different folks, represented in our look at the '60s and the '70s, so it has been very interesting.

DM: Yes, it forces me to go back and think as well.

SI: Yes. We find that we have the same things where people think of it as a compressed period.

DM: Really?

SI: Yes, but a lot of stuff happened, one event on top of another.

DM: Exactly. Let me know, and we'll set it up again if you want to continue.

SI: Yes, that would be great. Thank you very much.

DM: All right, nice meeting you folks.

SI: It was nice meeting you too, and have a great weekend.

DM: All right, you too. Take care.

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