Kenneth L. Ireland Jr. ’66
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
SpeakOut
July 20, 2019
Transcribed by Mim Eisenberg/WordCraft

[HUGH B.]

MAC NEILL: This is Hugh Mac Neill interviewing Kenneth [L.] Ireland for the Dartmouth SpeakOut Oral History Project. Today is Saturday, July 20th, and the time is about 11 a.m. I’m interviewing Kenneth here in his apartment in San Francisco [California].

So how I like to start all these interviews is by asking when and where were you born?

IRELAND: Mm-hm. So I was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on May 26th, 1944, ten days before D-Day [the Normandy landings].

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me a little bit about your family?

IRELAND: So I’m the oldest of four kids. My father, who just died at 101—he was an amazing human being. He was educated as a metallurgist at the University of Maine, and he worked during the war as a metallurgist building guns for the infantry troops. And he had a position at the Pentagon, actually, so he was stateside. His two brothers were—fought in the [U.S.] Army.

MAC NEILL: What was his name?

IRELAND: Kenneth [L.] Ireland. He’s Kenneth Ireland Sr., and I’m Kenneth Ireland Jr. But we had a period of estrangement when I—after I came out, for about ten years, and during that time I stopped using Jr. And, you know,—and then Dad—Dad, when he became—when he became a grandfather, he had to choose a name, because every—every—can I swear?

MAC NEILL: Yes.

IRELAND: Every fuckin’ New England family, hoity-toity family, has these crazy names for people, so my mother was Nana, of

course, for her grandkids, and Dad was Bif. I have no idea where Bif came from, but everybody always called him Bif.

MAC NEILL: Oh, so these are, like, pet names for—

IRELAND: Yeah, right.

MAC NEILL: —grandparents.

IRELAND: So, yeah, he had this. And so we lived in a little town called Nichols, Connecticut, which had about maybe 600 families in it. It was in an unincorporated part of Trumbull [Connecticut], which is very near the coast. And Dad worked at Bethlehem Steel [Corporation]. That's where he met my mom.

My mother was a very anti-clerical Roman Catholic, who was old Irish stock. She wasn't the—she wasn't the immigrant stock of the 1840s, which she told everybody about, because she was very—let's see. She was kind of full of herself.

And—but—but I was raised Roman Catholic. What else do you need to know?

MAC NEILL: Did your mother work, or did she stay at home?

IRELAND: No, my mother was home all the time. She had a station wagon and drove us around.

MAC NEILL: What's your family's ethnicity?

IRELAND: So my mother is—was Irish, and my father—my father was—his—his forebears arrived in—what the—Woburn, Mass., in 1647. So they were old English. And they were—they were dissidents.

My father was a freethinker. Wasn't particularly attached to any church at all. Never went to church. He eventually was baptized at ninety-six so he could be buried in the family plot up there in—in Maine. Yeah. Kind of a [unintelligible]—yeah.

So, yeah, during my father's—my grandfather had a—was apprenticed to his father, who was in construction trades, as a contractor and builder in Newton Centre [Massachusetts].

And then he went to Garden City [New York] in 19- —let's see, Dad was three, so it had to be around 1909 or something like that. And then he worked there until—and was very successful until the Crash [the Great Depression]. And then he had all his money tied up in nine houses, the story goes. Not really. It was actually—I've seen—we went back and looked at some of the houses in Garden City—and had to sell them for nothing.

And then he went to live in their beach cottage at Goose Rocks Beach in Maine, and my father went to the University of Maine during the Depression. And so did his brother Rich.

Donny [Ireland], who is—was my gay uncle, who just died—my father's youngest brother was gay. He went to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] on the G.I. Bill, where he met his partner of forty-five years, which was kind of amazing back then. And they would always come by and introduce, like, the "special friend" or something and had these stories about building the powder room in their house. And you're kind of going, like, *Yeah, c'mon, you know, yeah.* So it was that kind of closeted thing.

And my mother never encouraged my contact with Donny at all. She didn't like Donny. I think she knew I was gay, and she was doing everything she could to discourage me.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me about the neighborhood you grew up in or more about the town you grew up in?

IRELAND: Ah. So we grew up in this very small town. It was called Nichols, Connecticut. And it had a—when I went, it had a very small Episcopal church, a library and a Methodist church, and I was Catholic, but I sang in the Methodist church choir until my mother, who was a real estate agent at—oh, she did have—she did have a real estate agenct—she did work at that, I think, but not kind of like seriously. Anyway, she sold some properties to the archdiocese or got them a thing, and they building St. Catherine of Siena's Church [sic; the Parish of St. Catherine of Siena] in—on Shelton Road [in Trumbull, Connecticut]. That's what it was. We lived on Huntington Turnpike [in Trumbull, Connecticut].

You know, it was such a close-knit little community! I still can remember all the neighbors on either side of us and their kids, and we all went to school together, and I followed them—my sister Julie [Ireland Childs] keeps more in touch with them than anyone, so I find out news from her. One of her best friends was a girl she grew up with two doors down, Lisa Dunning [spelling unconfirmed]. They called her Weezie. She's still known as Weezie. Weezie. [Chuckles.] Weezie Dunning. Yeah.

MAC NEILL: Do you remember your address?

IRELAND: 1998 Huntington Turnpike. Of course I remember it. EDison 7-5147. DRexel 8-8603. We had two phone numbers. EDison 7-5147. I remember that very well.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me some more about your siblings?

IRELAND: Yeah. So Elen [Ireland Kentnor] is—I don't—two of my siblings have cut off complete communication with me, Elen and John. It happened after my mother's death, basically. And I'm still very close to my youngest sister, Julie, who's fabulous. You know, she has a gay son, Toby [Childs], and, I mean, they're so—they're just so wonderful with him compared to the way I grew up. Oh, my God! It's, like, I can't believe it. I mean, he lives a very openly gay life. He just finished graduate school at Columbia [University]. He's thirty-two. He's worked around the world in nonprofits. [Chuckles.] And she says—Julie says, "I really like that French guy he was going out with. I'm so unhappy they broke up." And I'm going, like, *Oh, my God!*

You know, and I once in a while get certain cautions from Toby. Like, "Okay, I'm gonna tell you this, but you can't talk about it with my mom." [Chuckles.] "Anything else, we can talk about, but we don't talk about sex or whatever," you know, so—so they're just great.

MAC NEILL: And so your other two siblings that you—

IRELAND: So Elen—Elen—Elen—Elen and I—we were, mmm,—we had kind of an antagonistic—she's a very strong-willed, very intelligent woman, and she also has very fixed opinions. And during my mother's final illness, she—we were—we were

reasonably close. You know, she went to Swarthmore [College] and then worked at Yale [University] as the—as a archivist in the—that library where they keep all the—she worked on the Lindberg Papers [the Charles Augustus Lindbergh Papers and/or Anne Morrow Lindbergh Papers], actually. A really bright woman. But, my God, did we tangle over—over the way my mother was treated when she was in her last days! It was just hell.

MAC NEILL: When did your mother die?

IRELAND: She died at nine- —she was born in 1916, and she died at ninety-one, so that would have made it what?

MAC NEILL: Seventy-seven?

IRELAND: No.

MAC NEILL: No.

IRELAND: Your not good at math. So 1916—

MAC NEILL: Seventy-five.

IRELAND: —plus ninety-one. No. Is two thousand—2007?

MAC NEILL: Oh, sorry, you're talking about her age—or it—it's—

IRELAND: Yeah, I'm trying to add her age when she died—she was ninety-three, and she was three years younger than my dad. My dad lived longer, obviously, much longer and much happier after she died, actually. So she died in two thousand- —actually, I was living in Mountain View [California] for a short period of time, and I remember the moment when my dad called up and told me that she died. So it was 2007, maybe.

MAC NEILL: And what was her full name?

IRELAND: Her full name? Leona Maher Carroll Ireland.

MAC NEILL: Would you consider your family middle class when you were growing up?

IRELAND: Upper middle class.

MAC NEILL: Upper middle class?

IRELAND: Oh, yeah.

MAC NEILL: Were the neighbors around you also of a similar class status?

IRELAND: Absolutely, yeah. Very, very—so we were—[phone rings]. Oh, God. Let me see.

MAC NEILL: Would you like me to pause?

IRELAND: Yeah.

[Recording interruption.]

IRELAND: Yeah, so, you know, they were all doctors and lawyers and judges and, you know, the Dunnings were the only people—the guy, [Robert E.] "Bob" Dunning was a great guy. He worked in a hardware store, but his wife had, you know, buckets of money from a trust fund. And then there was a judge who lived on the corner, and Dr. Fleming [spelling unconfirmed] lived up the street, and [Lester A.] "Les" Nothnagle [Jr.] and his brother-in-law [C. Robert] "Bob" Schulz, and Ed Hazel [spelling unconfirmed] had a company called Nichols Engineering, which they made a bucket of money on during the war.

Richard [C.] Sargent [Jr.] up the street with the kids, Carol [Sargent Dunning], Linda [Sargent Reinfeld]—Carol and Linda. I think—was there a third one in there? Yeah, I can't remember. But they were the Sargent Lock Company [sic; SARGENT Manufacturing Company], so, you know, that was a—they—you know, very wealthy family.

So we were in—we were on the lower end of that spectrum, because my dad had his own business, and—but still, you know, we belonged to a yacht club and a country club, and, you know, I went to a Jesuit school, and I always had my own car and had a sailboat, so, yeah, a very privileged upbringing. I went to dancing school.

MAC NEILL: How would you characterize your relationship with your parents, growing up?

IRELAND: So I was definitely almost always antagonistic with my mother. She was—she wore the pants in the family. My dad was very laid back, and he kind of hid out and did his—his business all the time, and so he was kind of distant. And, you know, never, like, gave me any real advice or told me what to do because that was verboten. You didn't do that with kids.

My mother made up for it, and, boy, was she—she was just—she was a piece of work. [Chuckles.] I came eventually to accept her and love her quite a bit, but, boy, was it an antagonistic—she was very homophobic. Even after I came out and I was living here, you know, I would still be introduced to girls or—"Aw, c'mon, Mom!" You know, "Okay, all right." You know, "Get a grip."

MAC NEILL: Where did you go to school?

IRELAND: So I started off at Nichols School, which was—had four classrooms in the middle of the little country New England town. And I was there through one to four, I guess.

MAC NEILL: Grades one to four?

IRELAND: Yeah. And then we went to—to Booth Hill School ,which was on Booth Hill Road, in the same town [Trumbull, Connecticut], but it had, you know, one to eight. So I finished there at eight. And then I went to Fairfield Prep [Fairfield College Preparatory School], which was the Jesuit school in—we had to drive through Trumbull and we were into Fairfield [Connecticut]. And it was on—I don't know, it was on—you know, it was a Jesuit high school. And I thrived there. It was great.

MAC NEILL: You had mentioned that your mother was Catholic and—

IRELAND: Extremely anticlerical.

MAC NEILL: And so how—and you sang in the choir.

IRELAND: I did, but it was a Protestant choir.

MAC NEILL: Did you attend church weekly?

IRELAND: Oh, yeah. Of course. You had to. I mean, she—she sold the pastor the property for the church. [Chuckles.] Of course you had to. But she had been—my father was not a Catholic, and he refused to sign the—at that time, when you married a non-Catholic, if he wasn't going to convert, he had to sign something saying he would never use birth control. And my father just said, "I'm not gonna do that." So he didn't sign.

My mother then was excommunicated, so she was actually—but we still went to church. Her mother and her sister lived with us, and they were—they were very—[Julia Wilson Carroll] "Judy"—"Judy" was very—she was kind of a super-Catholic. She was very devout.

MAC NEILL: Judy's the?

IRELAND: Judy was my aunt, my mother's sister, Judy. And then Catherine Egan [spelling unconfirmed]—Carroll, who was my grandmother. She was a very hardened woman. Not very pleasant.

MAC NEILL: Why did they live with you?

IRELAND: Because they didn't have any money after the Depression. Their father had died of a heart attack two years into the Depression, and he lost the car dealership that he ran in Bridgeport [Connecticut], and they lost the house on Elmwood Avenue, and they just had no means of support. So my dad was quite remarkable in that sense. He said, "Well, you know, come live with us."

MAC NEILL: Was it cramped living?

IRELAND: Mmm. It was a—the house originally had three bedrooms and a nice big living room and a sun porch and a dining room and kitchen, and then my father's—my father's father, who had been a contractor, came down, and he led a crew of Swedish carpenters—I'll never forget it, because it was so amazing, and they put an addition on the house, which was two bedrooms and a bath.

So I—my brother and I had the upstairs bedroom, and my bedroom had the downstairs, with their own bath. And it was still—it's still—I looked on—on Google Maps and stuff, and I found the house, and it looks almost exactly the same. They haven't done anything to it. Very typical of the period. Nice place.

MAC NEILL: So to go back to your education, was the elementary and middle school that you attended—were those public schools?

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And then for high school you went to private school.

IRELAND: I went to—the last three years of high school. I went to one year at Middlebrook [High School], which is the public high school. But my parents had—you know, I was quite bright, and my parents wanted to send me to a good school. And so they said, you know, "Jesuit education is the best." And it was affordable, and I think one of the neighbors' kids was there, and he was in an upper class. He was sixteen, so he had a car, and he drove us every morning. Yeah. And the Jesuit school was, yeah, really an amazing place. I entered the Jesuits after that. I entered the Jesuits after I graduated from Dartmouth in '66, and I was in the Jesuits for eleven years.

MAC NEILL: When did you first realize you were gay?

IRELAND: Seven.

MAC NEILL: Seven?

IRELAND: I'm sure—you know, I mean, it was, like, I remember exactly the—I can even think of the moment. I was looking at the *National Geographic*s that came and—because, you know. And, you know, all my friends were looking at the pictures of the naked African tribes ladies and stuff, and going, "Oh, look at those boobs" and everything. And I'm going, *Oh, that's not very interesting.*

But there was this one picture of the guys at Guadalcanal [British Solomon Islands] after the battle, washing off in the

river. So it was, like, thirty [U.S.] Army guys naked in a river, and I'm going, like, *Oh, my God, look at that! That's really interesting*. I was only seven years old. I had no idea what was happening, but I knew that's what I liked.

And, you know, I eventually—yeah, my mother used to say things like—oh, there was this guy, the guy who interviewed me for Dartmouth, actually, was an accountant or something in Bridgeport. And my mother later told me that he'd been discovered as part of a ring of homosexuals, "a ring of homosexuals." I mean, she was kind of a [Eugene J. "Gene"] McCarthy paranoid lady. And so this "ring of homosexuals," and, of course, a Dartmouth graduate was involved in it. But she only found out later.

They really wanted me to go to Dartmouth, because they thought it would make me a man. I didn't want to go to Dartmouth. I wanted to go to Harvard [University].

MAC NEILL: Why did they think you weren't a man before?

IRELAND: Phht! I didn't play sports. I sang in the choir. I liked opera. [Chuckles.] I didn't have anything to do with girls. You know,—yeah. And I—you know, I—I would kind of—you know, if I ran off into the woods, it was to look at stones and collect arrowheads and feathers, not to climb trees, so yeah.

MAC NEILL: And you mentioned that you went to dance school? Was this—what kind of dance did you do?

IRELAND: Oh, my God, it was Irene [F.] Comer. Irene Comer was her name, and it was at the Patterson Country Club [sic; The Patterson Club], and we did ballroom dancing. And I was—I was always the star pupil. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Of course—

MAC NEILL: How long did you do dance for?

IRELAND: Oh, my God! I think I started when I was eight, and I went all the way through the end of high school.

MAC NEILL: So was this pretty serious?

IRELAND: Yeah. Every week. Of course. And you wore—[chuckles]—you wore—you had to have a blue coat and black pants and

very nice black loafers, and then you wore gloves. And Irene Comer taught dance, and her sister played the piano. I was pretty—it was an amaz- —it was—I mean, you—actually, you don't see anything like that these days at all.

MAC NEILL: Do you think other children who attended middle school with you—did they know you were gay—

IRELAND: No.

MAC NEILL: —at the time?

IRELAND: No. I totally hid it. Yeah, I'd have been killed.

MAC NEILL: Were there kids who were bullied at the time for being—

IRELAND: Yes, me too. I was bullied. Of course.

MAC NEILL: Could you tell me a little bit about that?

IRELAND: Hmm. I remember one time in particular at Nichols School, so that had to be fourth grade, fifth grade, something like that. It was fourth or fifth grade. And we had to go out and play baseball, and I was terrible. I couldn't hit—the bat—I couldn't hit the ball at all. And one time I did. And then I ran to first base, and they—they had—I remember they told me I was out, for some reason, and I was disputing that because I was so happy that I made it to first base and hit a ball.

And there was this huge—then all of a sudden, there were these three bigger kids around me, going, like, "You were out." You know, "You're out! You're out!" And it developed into a huge fight. I tried to fight back, but I was beaten. That was one.

MAC NEILL: Did they—

IRELAND: Physically beat me? Yes.

MAC NEILL: And how did that relate to being gay? Were they calling you names?

IRELAND: No. No, I was just a sissy.

MAC NEILL: I see.

IRELAND: You never said “gay.” You never said “fag.” You might have said “sissy” maybe. Even that was sort of like—I mean, these were upper-class kids, and everybody was brought up—everybody went to Miss Comer’s dancing school. [Chuckles.] They went to Sunday school, and they were very—they were very well-brought-up kids. There wasn’t any—oh, it’s not what I see today or at least—I mean, in that environment. It was very rarified.

MAC NEILL: Were there other kids like you?

IRELAND: I’m thinking back, and I always thought back, and I wondered if anybody else was gay among my original kids that I grew up with, and I can’t think of any. Nancy Reich [spelling unconfirmed], next door, may have been a lesbian, but I don’t know. I never followed her—her path, her life after that. She lived next door. Her father was an alcoholic.

MAC NEILL: Did you ever tell your parents about being bullied?

IRELAND: Oh, yeah.

MAC NEILL: How did they respond?

IRELAND: “Be a man.” They just wanted to brush it over the table.

MAC NEILL: What were your family’s politics like?

IRELAND: They were conservative Republicans. My mother was the southern—southern Connecticut chair for the [Dwight D. “Ike”] Eisenhower campaign. Ike Eisenhower came through Bridgeport, Connecticut, on a whistle stop tour, on a train, and I was—in 1953, so I was—I was nine years old, and I got to shake Ike Eisenhower’s hand, because my mother was—and after she—after they won the campaign, she was appointed to be the—the [chuckles] ceremonial—she was called the Agent of Town Deposit, which meant that actually what she had—[Laughs.] She supervised the garbage pickup!

And the only black family in—they didn't live in Nichols, but they lived in Trumbull, which was next door—was the Green

family, and they went to—they were the only black kids in our junior high school, and their father was the garbage man. It was really racist.

My mother used to say things—when Jews started moving into the town, and I said—the Patterson Club was Jewish, but they just rented a hall for the dance school. But I asked her, "What's going on with the—with the Jewish clubs?" And "Why aren't there Jews at the yacht club?" And stuff like that. And my mother said, "Oh, they like their own clubs. They have their own way of doing food." "Yeah? Oh, really?" So absolutely really prejudiced.

My father once in a while would talk about "kikes." I was really—you know, I found it—early on, I found it really appalling.

MAC NEILL: Did the kids that you went to school with express the same racist thoughts?

IRELAND: Oh, sure. Yeah. I—I—I rebelled against that very early. And very early on, I knew something was—was wrong with that. And that was reinforced by the Jesuit education, of course, when I got there. Yeah.

MAC NEILL: And so before you got to high school, were the kids that you went to school with all white?

IRELAND: Oh, yeah

MAC NEILL Except the one black family?

IRELAND: No, he didn't—that was only in junior high school, I met the black—the Greens were there. I can't remember the kid, but he was kind of amazing. He was a great athlete. I remember the kid very well, but I can't think of his name right now. I remembered the last name. They were called "the Greens." You know, "Oh, the Greens," like, you know. Yeah, we were totally white, totally white, totally Protestant. A few Catholics, Italians, but they were lawyers, not Mafia people, you know. Or doctors. And that was okay.

And then a few Jews started to move into town. I remember that. And that was a big kind of scandal. But everybody else

was—it was a totally, totally white community. I mean, Sikorsky Helicopter [sic; Sikorsky Aircraft], right? You've heard of them, Sikorsky Helicopters?

MAC NEILL: No.

IRELAND: Largest helicopter manufacturer in the country?

MAC NEILL: No, I didn't know that.

IRELAND: Sikorsky Helicopter. He was a Russian immigrant. I went to school with his kids, his two twin kids. I think they had names like Ivan and Igor. They were—and so there were a few Russian immigrants in the family—in the town. The Sikorskys had a huge plot of land, a huge kind of estate thing. It was actually on—I think it was on Huntington Turnpike too, but about a mile south of us.

MAC NEILL: Was the racial makeup of the Jesuit high school different from your middle school?

IRELAND: Of course. Not many blacks, though. But certainly a much more—you know, Polish and Italian and—yeah.

MAC NEILL: Were you also bullied in high school?

IRELAND: No, not so much. No. We didn't have any sports. You didn't have to do sports. And I was---and I was a good student, so I would always be the kind of teacher's pet in some ways. Do you remember John [J.] McLaughlin on the TV?

MAC NEILL: No.

IRELAND: You don't. *The McLaughlin Group*? Right-wing social commentator, who was on PBS [Public Broadcasting Service] for years? He was my high school English teacher in senior year. He was a Jesuit who left the Jesuits, because he was a womanizer par excellence. He got thrown out, I think. And he ran for governor of Rhode Island on the Republican ticket. What a piece of work! [Chuckles.] Yeah. So—and John—John—John loved me.

MAC NEILL: Would you consider yourself popular in high school?

IRELAND: Nah. I was sort of middle. Again, it was not to make any waves. I mean, I had friends. I had even some good friends. They were all things like, you know, Latin geeks, who would go home and memorize twenty-five words of Latin every night so they could pass the quiz the next morning. We had to memorize twenty-five words of Latin every night. Lord-all-mighty! [Chuckles.] And I did that. And I was always a—I would be studying hard in the car on the way to school, and—yeah.

MAC NEILL: What were the social groups like in high school?

IRELAND: So—so there was a crowd called—there was a young scholastic named John L'Heureux [pronounced leh-RUHR], and L'Heureux left eventually, and he—he ran the very prestigious Stegner program [Wallace Stegner Fellowship] at Stanford [University] after he got his Ph.D. in English literature from Harvard.

And L'Heureux was there, and we had been reading Evelyn [pronounced EVE-lin] Waugh's book, *Brideshead Revisited*. I think that was where it was found. And there was a clique in the thing which was called the Bright Young People, BYP. So we had a clique in high school—Jan Vocik [spelling unconfirmed, pronounced VOY-sick], myself, Jeff Connell [spelling unconfirmed], I think maybe a little bit. And we were very cliquey, and we were the Bright Young People.

We would go to New York on the weekends for opera, ballet and a show and come back. Of course, we were about fifty minutes out of New York on the train. And my parents were fine with that.

MAC NEILL: What was their thoughts on homosexuality?

IRELAND: My parents?

MAC NEILL: No, the—your friends in high school.

IRELAND: I don't know. L'Heureux was kind of—was—is—is—was a closet case. I think he still is, although he married a nun. Hmm. Lenehan [spelling unconfirmed] was straight. So it was—so I'm going to say I was always kind of—you know, even when I was in the Jesuits for all that period of time, talk

about “Don’t ask, don’t tell”! I mean, “Don’t ask, don’t tell” was, like, you don’t. And—and if you’re going to come out and even have a sex life, you never tell that to other Jesuits.

And I, of course, when I was coming out, I told everybody. I was very open about my process because, you know, I’m a kid of the seventies, and we’re all under process and stuff like that.

And I remember—I remember—this is a—this is fast forward. This is after Dartmouth, of course, but I don’t think I have to be in sequence here.

MAC NEILL: No. I’ll keep us on track. What were you going to say?

IRELAND: So, yeah, I remember, you know,—so, obviously, there were tons of gay men in the Jesuits. [Whispers.] I didn’t even really know that. [Normal volume.] I didn’t—you know. I just met a guy who’d been in the Jesuits, just the other day, at Maitri Hospice [sic; Maitri-Compassionate Care] who was taking over as executive director. And I was the first executive director there. And so he asked me, and we had a long chat and everything.

And we were talking about the Jesuits, and it was—again, like, I was such a straight arrow. I mean, I would have fantasies about guys and kind of infatuation and all that kinds of stuff, but I never did anything.

MAC NEILL: You never had any sexual experiences with men in high school, or middle school?

IRELAND: No. Never. No, that wasn’t—that waited until—when I was in the Jesuits, I had one or two. I was a—I didn’t come out until I was about thirty-three.

MAC NEILL: Do you remember the year you came out in?

IRELAND: Year?

MAC NEILL: Yeah.

IRELAND: That I really came out?

MAC NEILL: Yes.

IRELAND: Was Harvey [B.] Milk's coming out day, here in San Francisco, 1977, November—November 19th or something? [Chuckles softly.] Yeah.

MAC NEILL: What subjects were you drawn to in high school?

IRELAND: I was in Latin and English and French, and at Dartmouth I went to the—I was—I spent a—we had a semester abroad, and I was at the University of Caen in Normandy [University of Caen Normandy], with [unintelligible name]. I was really good in French and Latin and, ehh, not so much mathematics. That was—I just had some block about it because it's actually quite interesting. Yeah, so the kind of—yeah.

MAC NEILL: And you'd mentioned that you had originally wanted to go to Harvard and not Dartmouth.

IRELAND: Yeah, yeah.

MAC NEILL: Why is that? Because Harvard—so, you know, we visited all these schools, and the Jesuits kept on saying to me, "You're not applying to any Jesuit schools?" And I'm going, "My parents don't want me to."

MAC NEILL: Why did they not want you to?

IRELAND: Because they didn't want me to become a Jesuit. [Chuckles.] It was very clear. And it was very clear that I wanted to become a Jesuit, which I eventually did. So they—so I remember Harvard when we went there. It was something like the—the—it would—it was away from home, it was different, it was a kind of—kind of urban environment. It was kind of interesting and exciting.

And—and I had applied and was called for an interview, but that—about three weeks before, I had been in a car accident, driving home from Jesuit prep to Nichols on the Merritt Parkway, and I hit a tree. Apparently there was a blowout, and the car hit a tree, and I was in a coma, and I was pretty disoriented.

So I was supposed to have this interview, and my mother said—I said, "I think I should put it off." She said, "No, go for it. Do it," knowing that I would completely fuck it up. And so I did. I went and fucked it up. I might have fucked it up anyway, whether I had a—I had a concussion or not, but—but I had already had the interview with Dartmouth, and they were very positive.

The guy who was a member—who eventually revealed to me, a member of a "ring of homosexuals," who was an accountant or something. Like, this very straight-laced kind of guy, who had an accounting—I think he was an accountant, and I can't remember his name, but I certainly had—I remember meeting him and talking with him.

At that time, you always had interviews with alumnus [sic] before you—I don't know if you still do that.

MAC NEILL: It's still a thing. Yeah, same.

IRELAND: Yeah. So—and then their report would be passed on. So all of the—so Harvard had one, and Dartmouth had one. I don't think I ever got one from Brown [University], but I did get into Brown, but they didn't want me to go to Brown because it was a city, and the temptations of the city—

It was always—the thing was always—the only talk about being gay or homosexuals were kind of like, "Don't do that. Don't go there. That's a dangerous place. Don't touch it. Don't look. You know, it'll infect you." There was kind of a—it was so weird.

MAC NEILL: Are you saying that they thought that if you went to a city, you might become gay?

IRELAND: Of course.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And that—that's why they were pushing Dartmouth?

IRELAND: Yeah, of course. It was a "man's environment." It was off in the woods.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me more about what, like, the reputation of Dartmouth was at that time, before—before you got there?

IRELAND: Oh, it was an excellent—a wonderful school. It was incredible. I never could have imagined getting the kind of education I got there. It was very—totally amazed. I mean, by the time I—by the time that I was a sophomore, I was fluent in French, and I went to France and I got even more fluent. I was a major in the department of religion, and French. I had to do a double major because I switched into religion my senior year.

And so I had an amazing group of people. Robin Scroggs, Jonathan [Z.] Smith, Jacob Neusner, who was an incredible, incredible teacher, absolutely wonderful. He's—he is *the* most—or he just—I think he's dead now? I don't know. We've corresponded—we corresponded a bit after I graduated, in the last years. I think he is *the* most published scholar ever. [Chuckles.] I mean, the list of his publications is, like, amazing. And, you know, a real Talmudic kind of scholar. And he was just an amazing man. And I remember him.

And it was—had the reputation was kind of like you had to be rugged, you had to be a man, you wanted to get into a fraternity. There was drinking, but, you know, you learned how to handle that. I'm an alcoholic in recovery, so I—you know, I never did learn how to handle it. But it was—it was known as a party school.

MAC NEILL: So what year did you graduated high school in?

IRELAND: I graduated in 1962.

MAC NEILL: All right. And what colleges were you choosing from? It was Dartmouth and then what other?

IRELAND: Dartmouth, Harvard, Brown. I think I applied to Cornell [University], Princeton [University]. We even had a backup school of a lesser—of a lesser—you know, they were pretty sure, with my grades and my intelligence and stuff, I'd get into one of those, although I didn't have any kind of—kind of sports thing. But then that was always okay because the Jesuits didn't have any sports teams. I mean, that was not—you know, it was nine to three, six periods a day: Latin,

French, religion, mathematics, whatever else we studied. Yeah.

MAC NEILL: So when you first got to Dartmouth, what was your first impressions of the campus?

IRELAND: I didn't like it.

MAC NEILL: Why?

IRELAND: I felt really isolated. I had a hard time making friends. I didn't like my roommates in South Fayerweather, it was called.

MAC NEILL: This was your freshman dorm?

IRELAND: Yeah, freshman year, the freshman dorm. And I remember–because I was then—as soon as you pledged a fraternity, there was a room open in Tri-Kap [Kappa Kappa Kappa], and I moved into the Tri-Kap, which really helped my social life a lot. But I was a big drinker. But that first year, I didn't really even like my roommates very much.

MAC NEILL: Why didn't you like them?

IRELAND: They were weird. [Chuckles.] So one guy—one of the guys, who was the smartest among us, always got the best grades—he was a very—came from a very Jewish background, and he would *daven* [pronounced DAH-vin] when he studied.

MAC NEILL: *Daven*? What's that?

IRELAND: *Daven*. *Daven* is [pantomimes action].

MAC NEILL: Oh, like rocking back and forth.

IRELAND: Rocking back and forth, like this. And that's very common in yeshivas when you—when you're saying—when you're looking at Scripture or studying the Talmud, you kind of rock back and forth like that, in prayer. So he would do that all the time while he was studying. And he had a desk over here, and I had a desk there, and I think can't remember the other's name, the other guy's name. Was it Randy

something? Anyway,—I can't remember either of their names.

And I just thought they were weird, because I liked to sleep and get up and rush—run across the—to my first class in Dartmouth Hall, which was usually French at eight o'clock, I think. So it was very easy: 7:15, 7:30, put on some clothes, run across and go to French class.

MAC NEILL: Why do you say that you had trouble making friends then?

IRELAND: I didn't.

MAC NEILL: You didn't have trouble.

IRELAND: I *did*.

MAC NEILL: Oh, you did.

IRELAND: Oh, yeah!

MAC NEILL: What? So what was it like socially then?

IRELAND: Well, it was kind of cliquey. Even more than a little bit. I was thinking back that, like, even the—I remember that place in the Hop [the Hopkins Center for the Arts] because that was the place where gay people kind of clandestinely met.

MAC NEILL: In just the—

IRELAND: At the coffee bar in the Hop, as you're going down to the big auditorium. That was—that was a place. And everybody was—and, of course, I was very holy and pious and everything, so I went to the Newman Chapel [Aquinas House] up at the end of Webster Avenue. And the priest there was Father [William L.] Nolan, Monseigneur Nolan, he became. And he was an Irish bag of wind.

But he always warned me—he said, "Oh, you don't want to go near the Hop. [Whispers.] No, don't go near the Hop."

MAC NEILL: Specifically because it was—

IRELAND: It was—they weren't saying it, but you didn't go to the Hop, to the coffee bar, because that's where the gay people hang out. And met one another and did whatever they did clandestinely or hooked up and decided to go to the woods or something. I had no idea whatever was going on.

MAC NEILL: So you didn't partake any of the sexual culture—

IRELAND: Never, no.

MAC NEILL: —on campus.

IRELAND: No.

MAC NEILL: Did you know anyone who did?

IRELAND: No. My roommates at—everybody at Tri-Kap was very—very heterosexual. On the weekends, when, you know, it was—I mean, [Dartmouth] Winter Carnival or that thing where they burn the bonfire or whatever is going on, and girls would come up. There'd always be girlfriends in the—in the—in the fraternity, sleeping, getting laid. I didn't have anything to do with that, either. But all my—

And I did—I did manage to make some really good friends at Tri-Kap too. I mean, people I'm still in touch with. So that was—so actually, being in the fraternity was kind of blessing in that way.

MAC NEILL: When did you move into Tri-Kap? Or when did you rush?

IRELAND: We were allowed to rush at the beginning of sophomore year, right? And you were allowed to—the space would be open, so I think I moved in that year. I kind of terminated my contract at South Fayerweather and moved into Tri-Kap. It was, like, two hundred dollars a semester or something. Yeah. So I was in the dorms for, like, a year and a half and then went to Tri-Kap. Then I went to France. I came back, and I was again at Tri-Kap. I lived there all the time.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me more about the cliques that you had noticed freshman year?

IRELAND: Well, of course, there were the jocks, the Beta House. Then there was the—and then next to us was—what name—what was the name of it? It was Richard—[Robert B.] "Rob" Reich [Class of 1968], the Secretary of Labor—was in—he was president of the fraternity right down—I can't think the name of it—down from—from—on Webster, right next to—right next to Tri-Kap, or two doors down, maybe.

MAC NEILL: Chi Gam [Chi Gamma Epsilon]?

IRELAND: No, it had—and they changed the name, and—

MAC NEILL: The Tabard.

IRELAND: The Tab- —maybe it was called that. Maybe something like that. I can't remember. But anyway, he was the president of that fraternity. And he was—and he was a very—even then, he was very political. He's such a short guy. He's only, like, you know, 5' 2" or something. And he's a little short, stubby kind of—very bright, very articulate. So I admired him. But he had his kind of political group.

And [Angus S.] "Gus" King [Jr., Class of 1966], who was a friend of mine, the senator from Maine. He was—he was in my class. Let's see, he—I don't remember what fraternity he belonged to, but he was—he also was this kind of political thing, which I never got into, because I was so—kind of just—I wasn't feeling very political, you know? I mean, I voted for—[John F.] Kennedy was the first person I voted—no, [Lyndon B.] Johnson was the first person I voted for. But all of it—but at that time, you know, most of the fraternity was voting for [Barry M.] Goldwater.

MAC NEILL: Was that indicative of the white—

IRELAND: The massive conservativeness, you know. Yeah, Barry Goldwater.

MAC NEILL: Was that representative of the entire campus, or just your fraternity?

IRELAND: No. I don't know if it was the entire campus, but, you know, I would say that the—I was just going to say the whole political scene to me at that time felt very kind of Barry

Goldwater-ish, you know? Like, you know, “Nuke the fuckers.” And it was—you know. But it was a little bit more dignified and kind of thought through than it is these days with [President Donald J.] Trump and his crowd.

MAC NEILL: Would you classify most people as Libertarian leaning, then?

IRELAND: Mmm, maybe. I mean, there were not any really Libertarians then. I mean, they had a small Libertarian Party. No, they were just kind of all Republican.

MAC NEILL: And you didn’t feel like you fit into any of the, quote unquote, cliques or the jock cliques.

IRELAND: No. And even at, you know, the Newman Club, where I was very active,—

MAC NEILL: The Newman Club?

IRELAND: —which is the Catholic thing out of the St. Thomas More Chapel [sic; St. Clement’s Chapel of Aquinas House], it was called, where—where—and I would—you know, I’d be down there at Mass—Mass, pretty much every day. And very much relying on not so much Nolan, but he had a couple of, you know, assistant priests who were younger and more—and I had such a wonderful experience for the Jesuits, that I gravitated there for kind of like my—my counseling, my mentorship, my whatever.

MAC NEILL: What were your thoughts on homosexuality when you entered Dartmouth?

IRELAND: It was a sin, that it was—that it was kind of aberrant but certainly sinful. Aberrant meaning kind of perverse. [unintelligible] I’ll tell you—you know, I’m talking about psycho- —I didn’t come out—I didn’t really formally come out till, you know, after lots of psychotherapy, and then, you know, Harvey Milk. God, that was amazing!

MAC NEILL: Did you know other gay people at the time, on campus?

IRELAND: I mean, looking back, you kind of go, *Oh, he was gay.* There was one guy, a really handsome, kind of very well-put-together sort of fellow, who was—I’m trying to think of his

name. I can't remember. But he was also a member of the Newman Club, and he was a football player, I think. And gay.

But it would be, like, I'd say things to—I can't remember the other priest's name, but not—Nolan's under- —you know, second in charge there. I mean, I presume that the club is still there and they still have a chaplain and all that. But he would say, "Oh, stay away from him." No reason given. You know, it was just, like, "Stay away from him."

MAC NEILL: So there were people who—

IRELAND: And he would—and he'd make—and he would be very—I remember him being very—very friendly, you know, and, like, taking a long time in the showers after the gym and stuff like that.

MAC NEILL: What did that mean by taking a long time in the shower?

IRELAND: Standing there naked in the shower and that when you went down—you went down that road, and there was the gym on the right-hand side, near the stadium. What's that called, that building? Anyway, I would—I had some—I broke my leg as a freshman, on skiing, and I—I had to do physical therapy for a year after that with—in the—in the kind of—with the trainer for the football team, who was on the second floor up—he was really—really, it was good physical stuff.

And I remember afterwards, there would always be some guys hanging out in the shower. Now I'm looking back and going, *Oh, yeah! Oh, that's what they were doing!* It was, like, kind of looking around, seeing who's available, seeing how big it is, you know.

MAC NEILL: You think they were cruising?

IRELAND: Hmm?

MAC NEILL: You think they were cruising?

IRELAND: Yeah, of course. Of course they were. [Whispers.] I didn't know it. [Normal tone.] I didn't pick up on that at all. [Chuckles.] It was so funny because, I mean, because the

memory of that guy who had—the Polish—I don't know, was he—I can't remember what nationali- —he was very handsome, though, and very well put together, and he was a football player, and everything. And he'd be down in the shower.

And then once in a while, Neusner would come in, who did his—his daily swimming. And here's this fat little Jewish rabbi with a little dick coming into [chuckles]—into the—into the shower room, and he was just chatting away, and, you know. [Laughs.] And like that. [Laughs.] And it was, like,—yeah. God almighty, that was so funny! I mean, as I look back on it, it was so funny because I was so clueless as to what was happening.

MAC NEILL: Would you say that there was an underground gay culture—

IRELAND: There had to be.

MAC NEILL: —in the group at the time?

IRELAND: There had to be.

MAC NEILL: How would you characterize the people who hung out at the café?

IRELAND: At the Hop, at the little—at that little—the little cafeteria there? Oh, they were all kind of artsie-fartsies, and they were in the plays, and they did the scenic design for the whatever in the theater. You know, when you walk in, there's that theater right there.

MAC NEILL: The Moore Theater, yeah.

IRELAND: It's still there, obviously. And how many people does that seat, 300?

MAC NEILL: I'm not sure.

IRELAND: Something like that. It's a small theater, I remember. And I remember one of the guys there—I don't think he was gay, but he—I remember how good he was. He actually went to Broadway. I remember him playing in *Mac the Knife*. It was an amazing performance. So he was there. And then there

were some guys who were interested in film, and—you know. They were all kind of like, they had their own little thing going on.

But I was—I took—I took that advice. I never had coffee there. I always went down on the street below the Dartmouth Inn [sic; the Hanover Inn], as you're coming in, down towards the theater. And there was a little shop, a little coffee shop about four or five doors down on the Inn side of that street. What's the name of that street?

MAC NEILL: Main Street.

IRELAND: Main Street, of course. And the theater's down there on the right, the movie theater. It's still there. And then there's that little alleyway coming up that you go into. There was a coffee shop on that street. Yeah, you know, even people that I might have had—like, David [R.] Godine [Class of 1966] was a—was in my fraternity. And he's a straight guy, obviously, but he did a whole project on—he was a senior fellow, and he did a project on—on different kinds of typefaces that had been used through history. And then he event-—he eventually had a company which printed books, Godine Publishing [sic; David Godine, Publisher]. Did some very famous stuff with the very antique typefaces on books. Really beautiful pieces of work.

So he used to hang out on this little street, and I remember—oh! Woody Guthrie? So one day, it was all, like, you know, "Woody Guthrie's in town" and everything, I remember, and he was in that little coffee shop down on that alley. I can't remember the name of it, but you walk down, and then there's that—just behind the Episcopal church or something? I think, or—anyway. Yeah. So there was that.

Then there would be the group, the [Edward H.] "Ed" MacBurney, I think his name was, who was the Episcopal priest there. He eventually became the Bishop of Preoria [sic; Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Quincy in Peoria, Illinois]. He at the time was unmarried. And I became very close to him. And even—and am still in touch, or I was in touch with a guy who entered the Episcopal seminary, but the very high church one. General Theological [Seminary], I think it's called. In New York. And then he became the

pastor of Mary Magdalene. But he was in my class. But he was a very high church Anglican.

And then he came out, and I saw him in Honolulu [Hawaii] a few times, and he kind of got married, and he, you know, had this church there where they walked around and carried the book and chanted and all this kind of stuff, which I think is sort of interesting. Or not.

MAC NEILL: And this is—and this is all after Dartmouth.

IRELAND: Yeah, that was after Dartmouth.

MAC NEILL: Okay.

IRELAND: But he came out, and he was also an alcoholic.

MAC NEILL: He came out after Dartmouth.

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: Okay. Did you know anyone who was out at Dartmouth?

IRELAND: No. Absolutely not. It was probably, looking back, like, even, I think at Harvard or a place in New York you might have had a little bit more open gay culture. In my time at Dartmouth, it was so homophobic that even—you—you just didn't. You didn't even talk about maybe being even questioning. I thought about, you know, sleeping with guys or something, but— you know, *That might be interesting*. I mean nobody—nobody. And any comments about gay people were mostly derogatory.

MAC NEILL: Do you remember any of those comments?

IRELAND: [Sighs.] [Pauses.] Not offhand. I mean, it would be, like,—like—like, that was probably the first time I heard "fag." It was in college. That was never used in my other schools.

MAC NEILL: Was it ever directed at you?

IRELAND: No.

MAC NEILL: Who was it directed at?

IRELAND: It would always come up in conversation, like talking about [Jean Nicholas Arthur] Rimbaud. He was a fag. I don't even know if he was or not, but, you know, it would come up. Somebody like that. And I'd kind of go, like, *What? Huh?*

So it was—Truman Capote stuff was just—was even coming out—was even—that would have been published then. I'm not sure whether even it coincides. But it would be, you know, public figures who had a—you know, "The New York City Ballet is all filled with fags."

MAC NEILL: So besides the coffee house and the shower rooms at the gym, were there other places or—

IRELAND: I didn't know about them.

MAC NEILL: Right.

IRELAND: I imagine there were. There usually are in a repressed culture, where people are—you know, I have that whole religious upbringing, the overlay, which, you know, gave me so much trouble when I was coming out. And, you know, I mean, you know, it still exists in the church at this point, "disordered—disordered desire," I think. What did they call it? Some weird—I wish my Jesuit training should—would—should jump into play at this point [chuckles], and I remember the word "disordered affections"? Something like that, whatever they call it. It's, like, very Thomistic.

And at that time, there was always lots of talk in Catholic circles about natural law. Like, why is—why is—why are gay people so bad? Well, it's a natural law. What does *that* mean? That means that it's natural for men and women to sleep together and produce children. Okay. But that became a tentative natural law, and you couldn't kind of disobey or go against that. You had to conform.

So it was like big conformity time. You know, everybody—you know, we all went to the—we all went to the bonfires, we all participated–the freshmen, you know, built the logs, and—I won the ice sculpture contest, actually, one year at Winter Carnival. I remember it melting [chuckles]—I remember it melting the day—the day of the carnival!

[Laughs.] It was a—and all the—and all the under- —all the strut work I had made to put the thing up was all—all came to pieces. The—[Chuckles.] Yeah.

MAC NEILL: If you were to predict, where do you think people went to go have sex?

IRELAND: I don't know.

MAC NEILL: Where were gay people in—

IRELAND: I don't know. I have no idea. Probably because I didn't want to know, or I couldn't let myself know. I—I have no idea. You know, there was that parking lot for the cars, off- —off-campus parking lot? I don't know if it's still there, but you'd go down past the gym, you'd go out on the road, and there's this parking lot.

MAC NEILL: I think they call it A Lot now.

IRELAND: Whatever it is. That was for student cars. You couldn't drive on campus, of course. And that's where—I remember. So there'd be—there was—I remember during pledge—because I was such a fuckhead in the fraternity that the pledges one time captured *me*, and as a reprisal for their harassment—and took me down and tied me up in the A Lot. And left me there, in the fucking cold.

MAC NEILL: In the winter?

IRELAND: In the—it was during—during rush—or after—after—after pledge, whenever that was. Like, in October, late October? Something like that. Yeah, the fucking cold. They left me there. So, yeah, that was bullying. That went on, for sure. Because I was being such a prick, too, during—during—during the—that pa- —period when you groom your pledges, whatever that's called.

MAC NEILL: What was the hazing culture like at Tri-Kap?

IRELAND: The what?

MAC NEILL: The hazing culture. Or what were the hazing practices?

IRELAND: Hidden?

MAC NEILL: Hazing.

IRELAND: Hazing. Ahhh! Hazing. Yes, I'm going to turn my hearing aids up here. Well, you—of course, you had the paddle, and you had to carry the paddle.

MAC NEILL: The paddle?

IRELAND: The paddle. Oh, you don't have the paddle.

MAC NEILL: I'm not familiar with it.

IRELAND: You had a paddle. Every—and I still actually have mine somewhere. I used an oar from a boat at home. And you had to bring your paddle and have it appropriately decorated with the KKK and the green and whatever on it, I remember. And you had your paddle. And when you came into the house as a pledge, you had to kneel down and you'd get paddled. The brothers would come up to you and paddle you.

MAC NEILL: Where would they hit you?

IRELAND: In the—on your butt.

MAC NEILL: Okay.

IRELAND: And then you'd have to say something—like, some little rote thing that you said. And, of course, it was totally barbaric. But, you know, we all got into it, because that's what you did. I don't think I even realized how bad it was.

MAC NEILL: There are some people who have written on the—on the history of hazing practices at Dartmouth, and one of the tenets of hazing practices seems to be homoeroticism or—

IRELAND: I don't—I never experienced that.

MAC NEILL: The paddling wasn't ever—

IRELAND: Not overtly.

MAC NEILL: Okay.

IRELAND: It could have been. Hmm. I don't see—I'm going to have to dig deep for this, because I remember it was a big part of our life in the fall, hazing the new pledges. And I made some enemies then, because it was a way for me to deal with my pent-up frustrations and anger and whatever else was going on in my Goody Two-shoes image.

MAC NEILL: What other hazing practices occurred then?

IRELAND: I don't know. I'm trying to think. Well, the hazing. And then things like you'd be—like, I was—I was captured. The pledges captured me.

MAC NEILL: And this was after you're a full-fledged member.

IRELAND: No, the pledges—I was already—I was in the fraternity. I was living in the house. I was walking back. The pledges captured me and somehow got me to the A Lot and tied me up. And they probably took off some of my clothes. I can't remember. Maybe left me in my underwear. So, yeah. I mean, it was not nice. No.

MAC NEILL: Would you say that was typical?

IRELAND: Yeah. Yeah, it was just kind of accepted behavior.

MAC NEILL: What were the members of the Tri-Kap like, besides just being heterosexual?

IRELAND: They were—so I was at that point starting to have some political sense, and I knew I didn't want Goldwater, and I admired Kennedy. I remember the day Kennedy was shot. I was walking down Webster Avenue towards the More House or whatever that Newman place was called. The Chapel of St. Thomas More? Newman House? Whatever it was called. Down at the end of Webster, just past the president's mansion there.

And I—and I was walking down, and there was a guy working on his car at one of the fraternities, just towards the end. I think one of the ones at that time which was very Jewish. I can't remember what it was. He was working on

the car, and he had the radio on, and I said, “What’s happening?” He said, “They just shot the President.” Yeah.

MAC NEILL: What were your politics at that time? Like, what issues were important to you?

IRELAND: Civil rights, for sure. Anti-nuclear. I was pretty much—pretty much a card-carrying Kennedy Democrat. I was the only person in my family in twelve genera- —since the Civil War ever to become a Democrat. [Chuckles.] My grandfather was so appalled. My mother was so appalled. And it was kind of—I think it was part of my rebellion that I just—you know. On the other hand, it’s something that’s stayed with me as I’ve, you know, matured and certainly came out here and got involved with Harvey and gay liberation stuff. It’s been in part ingrained in me, very much. But, you know, I—at that point, I never—I didn’t belong to any Democratic club at Dartmouth or—I just was maybe vocal when I was drunk. Which was every weekend.

MAC NEILL: Was your drinking more than the average? Did you drink more than the average?

IRELAND: I think so, yeah. Looking back, yeah, I find it probably really embarrassing. You know, it was a way for me to escape, a way for me to deaden my feelings. It was a way for me to avoid certain issues that I would eventually have to come to terms with. Yeah.

IRELAND: So you graduated in ’66?

IRELAND: Nineteen sixty-six.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And the U.S. would have entered the Vietnam War by then.

IRELAND: Oh, yeah.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me what your—what your thoughts on that were in college?

IRELAND: I was very much “leave”. I was very much “Do not get involved.” Yeah, Johnson had—Johnson had upped

Kennedy's kind of covert, underhanded, behind-the-scenes support of [Ngô Đình] Diệm [president of Vietnam].

One fraternity brother, a guy I really liked a lot, Dombrowski [spelling unconfirmed], whose father had been the head of the Voice of America—he was a fraternity brother of mine. He was wounded in Vietnam. Came back. I remember meeting him at one point, and he had—when he went to shake hands, he would do this. [pantomimes an action.] You know, lift up his arm.

MAC NEILL: He couldn't use part of his arm?

IRELAND: He couldn't use his arms, yeah. Two of my high school friends were killed. I didn't—I avoided the draft because I had—my broken leg left me with a—I have a metal plate in this leg, and it's kind of a [unintelligible] dowel. It goes up and down my leg. So they gave me a 1-F, I think, deferment, so when my number came up, it wasn't—and then I entered the seminary and got a 1-D, so I wasn't ever called upon to serve. But I registered and all that.

MAC NEILL: How did you break your leg?

IRELAND: Oh, skiing.

MAC NEILL: Oh, okay.

IRELAND: At Da- —not at—not at—not at the Dartmouth Skiway but at—in Stowe [Vermont].

MAC NEILL: And for many people who attended Dartmouth in the seventies and the eighties, there was a number of homophobic incidences that happened on campus. Do you remember anything major, any major incidents that happened while you were there?

IRELAND: Nn-nn. No. If I read some of their stories, I might say, "Oh, yeah, I remember that," but I actually don't remember because it was kind of like I lived in a world where I put that all—that was totally—that was like a totally compartmentalized part of my—my life and my thought, and it was something that I was praying about and trying to deal with. [Chuckles.] I mean, it was—yeah.

MAC NEILL: Given that, would you say that you enjoyed your time at Dartmouth?

IRELAND: So I—so there were parts of Dartmouth—there were things that I absolutely loved, absolutely loved, that were amazing. I mean, my work in the French department. They were absolutely unbelievable teachers. Professors there and reading [Albert] Camus and [Jean-Paul] Sartre, and I went and did a thesis on the [unintelligible] when I came back from Caen.

And I worked with a guy—and I remain close with even the sons of the guy who was the teacher in France, who was at the—eventually wound up at le École Normale [Supérieure], Miguel [unintelligible name], Professor [unintelligible]. And his—actually, his son Jean—he had one son who was gay, went to the *Nouvelle-Calédonie* [New Caledonia] as a bureaucrat. They wanted to get him out of France. But Jean came by with his wife here in San Francisco, and I showed them around for two weeks and had an absolutely—they were fabulous, okay? Just amazing.

So there were parts of Dartmouth—and Neusner and Smith and Hans [H.] Penner, and the Religion department was amazing.

The Fren- —the Fren- —the skiing was great. I was on the—I was—I taught in the ski school or whatever they called it, or the something up there.

We had a—one of the kids in the fraternity was the—I mean, he wasn't in the fraternity, but I knew him from the dorms or something. Was the—from the von Trapp family. And he was a skier who was—I mean, he was fucking amazing. Just—he kept on training for the Olympics. I don't know if he ever did the Olympic team, but he was just an amazing skier. He would go to Chile in the summers to ski so he could keep practicing all year round. I can't—he was a von Trapp. That's all I know. I think he still—he's probably still the person who runs their lodge in Stowe. So he—I knew him casually. Not great.

So there things about it that were absolutely wonderful, and then things about it that I totally hated. You know, I felt isolated. I felt cut off from the city life that I really liked, I wanted to experience.

The religious atmosphere was something where I—you know, at this point I'm—I'm—I won't say I'm not religious, but I'm definitely not Catholic, although I—I do Zen Buddhism quite devotedly. I could put it that way. And I teach English to monks and nuns in northern India, so I have some sense of that that still remains. But the doctrinaire part of Catholicism just is, like, phht, I don't want anything to do with it.

So that part of it was—as I look back, it was—so when I was there, it was like—it was a support for me for something, and I appreciated that, but looking back, I'm thinking it was not so great. It kind of—it just continued the repressive atmosphere of the church. I don't know. I mean, you went to Catholic school, so I don't know whether I'm—I don't have any idea about your religious feelings or none of them, but—I have mine.

MAC NEILL: In your application to SpeakOut, you had mentioned that Dartmouth was a hotbed of homophobia.

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: Would you say that—but that mostly went more unsaid, or was it more overt?

IRELAND: So—[Chuckles.] So maybe—let's see. So I ended the Jesuits in '66, and then I did my training in the novitiate. And the we went to—

MAC NEILL: Wait sorry, in where?

IRELAND: In the novitiate.

MAC NEILL: Where is that?

IRELAND: Well, I entered in Shadowbrook, in Lenox, Massachusetts, in the New England Province. And then I went to—then they—then after the, quote, "philosophy" training, I—they sent me to Harvard to do architecture, which was great. And then I

went to New York City to do theology, which I did for a year there, and then I came to Berkeley [the University of California, Berkeley] in 1970- —I think it was ’74, ’74, and I was in Berkeley for two years and never finished the degree in theology because I came out at thirty-two. That would be about right, somewhere in ’74, ’76, something like that.

Came and lived here. And then I immediately had a gay roommate, and we moved here to 94114, and I met Harvey Milk. And at that point, you know, a hundred gay men a year were—a week—were arriving in The Castro [District of San Francisco]. A hundred guys a week would just come, and you’d have—and it was here—and it was, like, all of a sudden, it’s, like, you know, you could be gay.

So that’s my background [chuckles] of looking back at Dartmouth, you know, where a hundred men did not arrive at Dartmouth every week and be gay. You know, you weren’t even—you weren’t even allowed to say it.

MAC NEILL: So compared to San Francisco, Dartmouth was—

IRELAND: Yeah. And I remember just a couple of years ago, I met—I met a gay couple who were—who were both at Dartmouth. One was—at that time, one was a senior, and one was a junior, and they were a couple. You know, they just were—at that point, I don’t know, they could have married or not. But anyway, it was, you know, very clear. And I met them here, doing something.

MAC NEILL: Okay, so you met them after Dartmouth?

IRELAND: Yeah, I met—yeah. And it was just a few years ago. And I remember—and, you know, I think—I asked him how they met, and he said, “Oh, he was the—he was my freshman”—what do you call them when you’re the—the guy who introduces you when you’re a freshman? You get the beanie. You get the beanie still?

MAC NEILL: No.

IRELAND: Oh. We used to get beanies with a number on it, a little green beanie with a white thing, and you’d get—have some upperclassman be your orientation guy. It was a guy

because we were all guys at the time. And—and he said, "Oh, yeah, he was my" whatever it's called, orientation guy. "I met him, because he was a sophomore and I came in, and he was in my little cohort, and we fell in love." My God! [Chuckles.] This is not the Dartmouth I remember. At all. And it was very clear that they were, you know, a committed, loving couple, so—yeah.

MAC NEILL: There are some people who say that the introduction of women to the college helped with—helped kind of end some of the homophobia that was occurring before then.

IRELAND: I hope it did.

MAC NEILL: What did you think about the all-male culture?

IRELAND: It was just an accepted part of life. I've been to—I started that when I was in Jesuit school. It was all—all guys. It wasn't just—we were all men. It was segregated. I just took that as normal. Looking back, I don't know how we did, and I can certainly appreciate, you know, what would happen if you have a little stronger woman's presence in the environment, in the conversation. Of course. So—but I have no experience of that, so I really can't say whether or not it helped or not.

MAC NEILL: So you graduate in 1966, and from there entered sem- — Jesuit seminary school.

IRELAND: I entered the Jesuits August 15th of that year.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And how long did seminary school last for?

IRELAND: How long did the school?

MAC NEILL: Mm-hm.

IRELAND: When you go with the Jesuits, that's where you are, you know, so I was there for eleven years.

MAC NEILL: Eleven years. Okay. And then within that time, you went to Harvard for architecture?

IRELAND: Yes.

MAC NEILL: Okay. Could you tell me a little bit more about the trajectory then.

IRELAND: That's when I became really radicalized. I really became radicalized then, because I had met [Daniel J.] "Dan" Berrigan and really admired him a lot.

MAC NEILL: Who's Dan Berrigan?

IRELAND: Dan Berrigan was the—he and his brother, Joseph—[He likely mean Philip F. Berrigan]—were—who was not a Jesuit. Dan was a Jesuit. Joseph [sic] was a—some kind of a small religious order in Baltimore [Maryland], and they became the core of the anti-Vietnamese Catholic action. Dan Berrigan spent seven years in Danbury Penitentiary [sic; Federal Correction Institution in Danbury] for his role in the antiwar movement.

So when I was in—when I entered the Jesuits, the first two years—of course, you don't watch TV, you don't hear any news, you havw no contact with the outside; you were just in this enclosed environment, going to Mass, saying your prayers, doing the spiritual exercises, all that kind of stuff. And—which was okay. I actually kind of liked that in a way and developed some very intense emotional connections with guys, but we were never allowed, of course, to express them in any way.

MAC NEILL: Do you mean in a romantic sense or more in a friendship sense?

IRELAND: Oh, it was in a romantic sense, yeah. Very much—very much infatuation kind of thing. One of the guys I still—I was still in touch with—he left the Jesuits and become a diocesan priest in Maine, where he had three parishes, and he would have a car and drive from one to the other, within a 150-mile radius or something, to take care of the parishioners. It was, like, an amazing kind of ordeal. I could think of his name, too, if you give you a minute. I'm seventy-five, so sometimes the names don't come back so easily. Yeah.

But in the Jesuits—so Dan Berrigan was there, so I went—I got out of the novitiate and went to—went to Weston College

[now Boston College School of Theology and Ministry] for philosophy and then was chosen—

MAC NEILL: Wes- —sorry. You went to Weston College?

IRELAND: It's called Weston. It was called Weston College. It was the philosophy—theology.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And where is that?

IRELAND: In western Massachusetts. [Transcriber's note: He means eastern Massachusetts.] Weston, Mass., just outside of Boston. And at that time, we were bused into—every day, we would get on a bus and go to Boston College, where we did our studies, because they had—they had taken that out of the seminary and put us into a more diverse kind of environment.

So then I got involved with kind of making chapels, so I was the chapel guy. I would design and build chapels, and I did that at—at Boston College and St. Peter's College, and I did that in novitiate, and I did that at Weston, so I would—you know, I'd be the guy who'd come in and design the altar facing the people and, you know, where things would go and the kind of the way it would be set up.

And I decided I wanted to study architecture, and they said, "Fine." "Oh, yeah, really? You said, 'Get into a school and get some money.'" So I applied to Harvard and got into Harvard, and they allowed me to go.

And at that point, lived in Cambridge [Massachusetts], in a small house. And in the house was a fellow—it was a very kind of radical Jesuit household. They were all—mostly all graduate students at Harvard. Every one of us was, actually. Two in religion, one in medicine and me in architecture.

And what was Galvani's—anyway, John Galvani was there. And Galvani was a guy who'd been in Beirut. He was a priest and he—but in Beirut, and came back, and he was very active in the antiwar movement, so much so that they had—they stole records from the Dorchester [Massachusetts]—where you go to register for the draft,

whatever that's called. But—you know. So they have records of all the kids who registered for the draft there.

So they broke in one night, stole all the records and poured blood on them. Very, you know, aggressive, nonviolent action. So I was involved in that. We had the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] coming to the house, checking us out. Knock on the door. "Who are you?" "I'm Joe Shmoe from the FBI." "Oh, really? What can I do for you?"—you know. And we were all instructed on how to say and what to deal with them. So I was very involved in that—in that movement and got really radicalized.

MAC NEILL: What year did you start attending Harvard for architecture?

IRELAND: That was when I was at Harvard for architecture, yeah.

MAC NEILL: And what year was that?

IRELAND: Sixty- —'69?

MAC NEILL: Sixty-nine? Okay.

IRELAND: Sixty-eight or '69.

MAC NEILL: That would have also been around the same time that the Stonewall riots happened.

IRELAND: That's right. So okay. So actually, I know exactly when it happened, because I was then at Woodstock College. And—and at that point, I was starting a seminar series on "The Church and Homosexuality," at the sem- —at Woodstock, with the blessing of, like, everybody.

MAC NEILL: And where—where is Woodstock College?

IRELAND: At the time—Woodstock College had been *the* most prestigious Jesuit theology in the U.S., so it was where John Courtney Murray and these people who had been advisers for Vatican II [the Second Vatican Council] and then, you know, spearheading the church in sort of an open direction.

And I—Cardinal Avery [R.] Dulles was a guy—I lived in a house with him for a year. A very nice man. He was actually

quite a wonderful man. We all went to—so we lived in apartments on the Upper West Side, and we—we were—we went to school up at Union Theological School [sic; Union Theological Seminary], where we either rented schoolrooms or there was some arrangement where we just went to a building at Columbia and did our classes there. And they were open classes to everyone so that was—you know, from the Hebrew Theological School and from the Columbia Theological School, and the Jesuits were there, and it was this very ecumenical kind of open environment. And I was doing this seminar series on homosexuals and the gays.

MAC NEILL: And were you out at that point?

IRELAND: No.

MAC NEILL: Okay.

IRELAND: I was at—I mean, everybody knew I was gay. I didn't know—I didn't say I was gay. I even had a girlfriend, but—yeah. It was kind of my homophobic way of dealing with it. So I do a sem- —this is like so me. You know, I'm doing a seminar about gay life and the church and trying to date this girl, and being a seminarian and trying to be celibate, and this craziness was going on, you know, and I couldn't sleep, and it was just a mess.

So I was doing this. So just after that, I—I—I put out the word that I was doing this seminary, and I remember this kid responding to me, and he came, and he did a series of lectures, and he had participated in the Stonewall, and he had been a Passionist priest, and he left, and he then became a gay activist.

And I remember meeting and talking with him and how fascinated I was but how kind of like perplexed I was by his stance. I mean, I wanted to be supportive. I was supportive. I'd organized the damn thing. At that point, I knew that there were gay people in the Jesuits with me. I didn't want to admit that I was gay at the time, but there were, you know, plenty of guys—I mean, at that point, there were at least seven or eight guys I knew who died from AIDS [acquired immunodeficiency syndrome] eventually.

And in my novitiate, among the people in the novitiate, three people—thirty-six people—thirty-six guys. Three of them have died of AIDS. Maybe four or more. I don't know. I know of three definitely who died, because that hadn't hit, either. But Stonewall had.

And I was in New York. And at that point, that was—Stonewall—they were commemorating Stonewall, remembering it and organizing events around it and further demonstrations and stuff. I never went to any of those, but I had my little seminar group up at [chuckles]—up at Woodstock [chuckles], in this little room in the—in the—whatever it was, that building. I remember the building very well. It was just as you get to 125th Street, and you go kind of across and down a little bit. It was the center for the World Council of Churches or something. They had a building there. That's where we had our classrooms.

MAC NEILL: And just to keep the chronology clear here, you had—so you'd entered the seminary in 1966.

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: You had gone to Harvard—

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: —to study architecture under the seminary in 1968 or '69.

IRELAND: Yeah. Till '72.

MAC NEILL: Okay, and then you moved to New York in '72.

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: To study at Woodstock.

IRELAND: Woodstock, correct.

MAC NEILL: Which is also located in New York City.

IRELAND: It was on the Upper West Side.

MAC NEILL: The Upper West Side. Okay.

IRELAND: But we were very diverse. We had little communities spread around apartment houses, individual ones. The biggest one was on [West] 98th Street, where they had about a hundred seminarians there. And then we all went up to—we walked up to Columbia. So we were all around 98th to—and Columbia is 120—[West] 112th Street.

MAC NEILL: Got it.

IRELAND: I lived at [West] 102nd [Street] and Riverside Drive, so ten blocks up. We'd walk up.

MAC NEILL: Okay. And then you were there for two years?

IRELAND: I was there for a year, and then—and I did all that stuff and, you know, made friends with Avery. And that summer—that summer, a seminarian from Chicago [Illinois], who was a friend of one of the friends of the guys in the house, came through. His name was [Robert] "Bob" Partika [spelling unconfirmed]. I remember him quite well. I was trying to think of his name the other day. It just came to me: Bob Partika.

And Bob started talking about a Jesuit in California, at Berkeley, who was doing work with the Enneagram fixations and studying meditation and working with Claudio Naranjo. And I remember sitting up almost all through the whole—still, like, three or four in the morning, listening to his story. And the next morning, I got up and said, *I want to go there.*

And so I called the provincial that day, who was my superior, and I said, "I want to go to Berkeley. I want to transfer and work with Bob Ochs." And I can't tell you how different the church was then. I mean, they'd let me go to Harvard. I'd been successful. You know, I was open about dealing with everything I was dealing with. They were great.

MAC NEILL: When you say you were open with dealing—

IRELAND: I mean, I went and told them, "I have homosexual feelings." They said, "Fine. Here's a shrink." And they gave me the name of a—of a very competent therapist, who wasn't Catholic and who wasn't Jesuit, and I went to see him.

MAC NEILL: What did he tell you about homosexuality?

IRELAND: He said—he said, "You know, being gay is just fine." He said, "The only thing you're going to have to deal with is the non-acceptance of people. That's gonna be hard for you. And you're a Jesuit, and that's gonna be hard for you, being celibate." Kind of like after six months, I said, *Yep, that's about it*.

So I went to New York after that. That was in Boston. I remember I did that when I was in Boston or Cambridge, somewhere in there. I remember he had an office on the—in—on Marlborough Place [sic; Street, in Boston] or something. I remember it quite—yeah.

And then I went to New York and started coming out and had—had gay friends, and I kind of recognized that they were gay, and I was still trying to have a hetero- —prove that I was heterosexual by having this affair with a Chinese girl who lived across the hall from us in the apartment building on 102nd Street. And—yeah, it was like—you know, it was very strange.

MAC NEILL: Were you allowed to have—

IRELAND: No, of course not.

MAC NEILL: So your girlfriend was—it was—it was not okay to have a girlfriend.

IRELAND: That's right. No, of course not. It was my first kind of exercise outside of the—and it was when I started to realize I never could be celibate. And that was eventually the thing that—I mean, more than anything, that led me—take me out of the Jesuits was my, just—I realized that celibacy was just [whispers] a fucking stupid idea. [Normal voice] For most people. Some people—I've met some celibates who were quite happy and successful and well adjusted, and the majority are not. And I was going to be one of the ones who was not. And eventually, when I realized that, I had to leave.

So, yeah, Stonewall was going on. I met this guy who did the thing. And then I went—I came to California and started intensive psychotherapy and work and group work in

Berkeley with Claudio Naranjo and Bob Ochs, who was the Jesuit who was his student and working at JSTB [Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, now Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University], which is just across the—you know, on Holy Hill up there [in Berkeley]. It's still there. No, it's not! Moved to Santa Clara [University]. But it was up on Holy Hill at the time.

And I lived in my own apartment at the American Baptist Seminary of the West. And that was—and then I did start to come out.

MAC NEILL: And when did you first get involved with Harvey Milk's campaign?

IRELAND: When I moved here to the city. I lived at—I lived at—the first place I lived was out on Frederick Street [in San Francisco] with Hal. Hal and I lived there, and I then moved—then I found my first boyfriend, Terry, Terry Regan [spelling unconfirmed] and we lived at Haight[-Ashbury] and—Haight and Divisidero [Street]. And I would walk into the—I was doing a lot of photography at the time, and I'd walk into Harvey Milk's camera store, because that's where he went.

And I met Harvey. And [chuckles]—he was—he was—oh, God, what a—what a fucking amazing man he was! And you'd go in there, and he had his store, and you never could figure out—he couldn't figure out where the camera—where your photos were, and he had to have six people keeping him organized.

And you'd sit down, and he'd say, "Sit down for a while." And you sat down. On the red couch. Just like—just like in the movie, *Milk*. They even had the same couch. They had the same store. I remember it so well. You'd go in there, and you'd sit down. You'd sit on the red couch, and you'd just listen to—listen, be part of the conversation with Harvey.

And he was [chuckles]—he was just amazing! He would—I mean, there was complaining, and there was—so I remember one afternoon really well. There were a lot of Irish and Italian widows in the neighborhood, and Harvey at that point had become—started to become known, because he was already into his second campaign, and he was running

against the kind of Chamber of Commerce gay guys who were here.

MAC NEILL: Do you remember the year?

IRELAND: Yeah, 1975. It was the ’76 campaign I worked on, so late ’75.

MAC NEILL: And were you still part of the Jesuits at that point?

IRELAND: I had just—just—I hadn’t quite signed my papers, but I had taken leave of absence and done the spiritual exercises again, and, you know, it was pretty clear I was out. I just hadn’t signed the papers. And then I went and signed the papers in nineteen-seventy- —and that was eleven years, so it was ’77. So I was still technically a Jesuit, but I was on leave of absence, which means you’re kind of like—everything but the paperwork, you know. And some people actually took leave of absence and then went back. I didn’t. It was called—the technical canonical word is “exclaustration.”

So I remember sitting there that afternoon in ’75. It might have been ’76, but I think—it might have been the ’76 campaign. And I think that was it because he was killed in ’79, November ’79, so it was during that whole period—so it was probably ’76. And I remember sitting there one afternoon, and he just—he would come in—you just—you know, he’d—he’d come in, and he was just kind of open, and he goes, “Oh, sit down. Spend some time with us.” You’d go over and sit on the red couch and just listen to Harvey talk.

And he’d talk and be political and organizational stuff. So I remember one time—this one afternoon, and three of these elderly women—they were all Irish women—came in. And there used to be this thing on—where the Bank of America is now, on the corner of 18th and Castro. That was the Hibernia Bank. It was the old Irish bank. The Hibernia Bank was there.

And there would be these long lines of guys out there, shirtless, in jeans, standing at the Hibernia Beach. That was what it was called, the Hibernia Beach, and you’d go by, and they’d be cruising and picking up and, you know, having sex two or three times a day. And it was wild.

So these—these old—these ladies came in and started complaining. “Harvey, you know, what’s goin’ down there with these guys? They’re all standin’ there half naked at the Hibernia Beach. What’s happening?” You know? Kinda—ahh.

So Harvey would just—he just—it was like—he said, “Okay, now, let’s calm down. What are you really objecting to? You know these guys. They’ve moved into the neighborhood, and they’re revitalizing the neighborhood.” “Yes, we do. We appreciate that” and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. He said, “Yeah, so they’re gay guys, and, you know, they have a right to express themselves, and this is just a little bit kind of their self-expression.”

Whatever it was, he wasn’t kind of excusing anybody. He was trying to show both sides of it to these ladies. You know, in a half hour he had them signed up to work on his campaign. [Chuckles.] I mean, this was, like,—this is—he was absolutely amazing, absolutely amazing, that he—I just—and I remember sitting there, going, like, *What the—holy mackerel! This guy is just amazing.* And he was. A really remarkable human being, a remarkable politician. What a loss!

MAC NEILL: Do you remember the White Night riots?

IRELAND: Oh, yeah.

MAC NEILL: Were you involved with them?

IRELAND: No. So I at that point was having—I had a cabinet shop. Was I at Alabama Street, or was I on the shipyards? I don’t remember. But I was making furniture. And I remember the sirens going off, and driving through the Civic Center, and the riot—and the police cars were burning, and, you know, people were getting bashed on the City Hall steps.

So—and that was—no, that was later in the night—so earlier in that night, I had been to a meeting of the—it wasn’t called the Harvey Milk [Democratic] Club [now the Harvey Milk Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Democratic

Club] at that time. No, I think we just switched the name to the Harvey Milk Club. And we met in the women's building.

And I was walking back to—at that point, I lived on—I think I might have still been at Haight and Divisidero. I was walking back, and I was with Paul [H.] Melbostad and Jeff Hamilton [spelling unconfirmed] and Paul's lover-partner, Kevin, and maybe Rick Pukar [spelling unconfirmed]. So we were all walking back from this meeting, and then we went to where Harvey's is now; it used to be called the Elephant Walk.

And the Elephant Walk had—it was named after that famous [Elizabeth] "Liz" Taylor movie, and both things came down. And the door was kind of kitty-corner. It was at an angle. It wasn't on the—it was, like—it was on the—it faced the absolute corner. And it had two brass elephant tusks on the door. It was called the Elephant Walk.

So we went in there for a drink. And all of a sudden, these huge—these guys appeared on the street. They'd all just come out, and—a Harvey Milk kind of phone tree thing that—what's his name?—Cleve Jones had organized. Had gotten everybody out on the streets, and there were people shouting, "Out of the bars and into the street! Out of the bars and into the streets!"

So we went into the streets, and then all of a sudden, 150 cops [from the San Francisco Police Department] came down the street with their batons. And I was standing there at the corner of the door, and I got beaten. So, yes, I did participate, I guess. I got beat up. I remember that really well. Not so well; I can't remember the full sequence of events, but I remember the—the main points, yeah. And the—you know, the cars—the police cars were burning, and, you know, it was just fucked.

MAC NEILL: What did you think of the characterization of the riots afterwards? Do you think they were accurate?

IRELAND: What part of the characterization?

MAC NEILL: The media's characterization.

IRELAND: No. No. I—you know, it was—the San Francisco Police force at that time—I don't know if it's changed that much—was, like, almost 90 percent Irish, 100 percent conservative, 99.6 percent homophobic. And they were—they—they rallied around [Daniel James] "Dan" White. They were just like the fuckers who are rallying around [President Donald J.] Trump these days. You know, they rallied around Dan White. And Dan was a—Dan was a very troubled guy.

MAC NEILL: What did you think of the "Twinkie defense"?

IRELAND: You're kidding me. Fucking bullshit. Total bullshit. Yeah. Yeah. It's amazing. I remember the day Harvey was shot. [Sighs.] Yeah.

I knew George Moscone's mother, too, Gina. Gina was his wife. Let's see what her name was. She was at the Heritage home out on Bay [Street] and Laguna [Street], the building that Julia Morgan built. She was there with—and I had a very close woman friend out there I visit all the time, Nancy—Nancy Storm. And Nancy and Gina were good—I think her name *was* Gina. Mrs. Moscone, anyway, whoever she was. She had been—she was Dan's mom—George's mom.

Assassination of a son is something you never get over. [Whispers.] That was just tragic. [Normal voice.] Harvey—Dan White was a purely evil guy, totally evil.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me a little bit more about your first boyfriend?

IRELAND: Where did I meet Terry? I think we met at the Elephant Walk. And I was still drinking pretty heavily. He was young. He was cute. And we moved in six months later, after we started dating. I moved into his—I lived with—Hal and I lived on Frederick Street, right opposite Kezar Stadium, kitty-corner. And then I moved in with Terry at—just two buildings up from Divisidero and Haight, on the south side of the street. Third-floor walkup.

We were together for—seventeen years? He'd been a painter, house painter. Been at the University of Pennsylvania. Was the coxswain of the crew team. Very nice guy.

MAC NEILL: What did you do for work after leaving the Jesuits?

IRELAND: I drove a cab and started a cabinet business. I had no business training, either. [Chuckles.] I didn't. But that's how I supported myself. You know, finish your degree and get a professional job—don't waste a good Ivy League education on some stupid shit. You know, but it's what we did, because we were—at that point, you know, gay people were still marginalized, and out gay people were really marginalized.

And here, not so much, but there was kind of a classist thing going on. You know, the Chamber of Commerce gay people—[James M.] "Jim" Foster was his name, who ran—he was Dianne [G.] Feinstein's kind of—

And then there was—oh, there was a gay guy at Dartmouth, who worked for KQED[-FM], I think, and then worked for Dianne Feinstein. I can't remember his name, but he had been at Dartmouth with me, and all of a sudden I ran across him here, working for Dianne, I think. And you know, they were kind of like the very buttoned-down, traditionalist sort of corporate-style gay guys, you know, with, you know, wanting to make money and make a name for themselves. And they were very anti-drag queen, anti-trans, anti-feather boas, you know. I mean, it was like they were—yeah. And I definitely at that point wasn't going to have anything to do with them.

MAC NEILL: Would you say that's indicative of most gay men who had graduated from Dartmouth?

IRELAND: I do not know. I only know—oh, I know two. I know two. But one was another guy I met later, who'd been a boyfriend of a guy I had an affair with. He had been at Dartmouth. And he worked—he worked quite high up in some nonprofit. Very bright guy. He eventually committed suicide. He was a Dartmouth graduate.

And then this other guy—he's on the—the other guy is on the—he's—you see him often on—if you watch KQED and they have their Legacy program thing? You'll see this guy, who's, you know, kind of well put together, sort of professional politics—politician kind of—kind of thing. Yeah. I can't remember his name now. Chuck! Chuck Forester. That's his name. I think that's him.

MAC NEILL: Can you tell me more about the Chamber of Commerce gays? What does that mean exactly?

IRELAND: So—well,—so there was a—a group, and they *were* the Chamber of Commerce gay guys. They were just—you know, they basically were the guys who had the business interests, the real estate interests, the bars. They, and—no, *that* was Chuck Forester. I can't remember. Anyway, so they ran this candidate. He was actually the first gay candidate to run, and he was defeated

MAC NEILL: Do you remember when he ran?

IRELAND: in 1974 or '73, '74, sometime in there.

MAC NEILL: For a position on the—

IRELAND: [San Francisco] Board of Supervisors.

MAC NEILL: Okay.

IRELAND: I can't remember his name. But he was the kind of guy who would represent the real estate interests, the Chamber of Commerce guys, you know? And Harvey was not that, at all. Harvey was you—you know, your rabble-rousing, get-out-the-kid, get-out-the-vote kind of politician, much more populist.

So these guys were—I knew a lot—I mean, this was a very big—a big faction of the community here. The community was split. And, you know, even after Harvey's assassination, they still have a kind of—I mean, you look at, you know,—you look at the successors in the political scene here too, and I think they—everybody, you know, will bend their knee at the statue of Harvey. They're still pretty corporate.

You know, they're going to support big real estate developers, support the tech companies coming into town, and, you know,—and I do too, but not with the same kind of passion that these fellows have.

MAC NEILL: I'm interested in where—in how gay men from Dartmouth kind of got into the world and then how they situate

themselves socially and politically. So that's why I was asking—

IRELAND: So I'm very left–I'm very left leaning. I'm very much an activist. And I'm—I'm not—I'm not on anybody's A Gay list. I've hung out with them. I've hung out with [James C.] "Jim" Hormel and some of those guys for a brief period of time, because I've been the director of nonprofits and stuff like that, so, you know, you had to because this is where the money was.

But these guys have a very—a very segrega- —they're—they're quite a bit like the home town I grew up in and I have so much trouble with. It's like a very segregated, classist, sort of one-sided gay life, kind of like the very normalized gay life.

MAC NEILL: Can you—can you describe that for me?

IRELAND: Normalized gay life?

MAC NEILL: Yeah.

IRELAND: You'd hardly know I was gay. But I'll tell you,—you know, I'll tell you up front that I really like to sleep with men. Those are my best affections, are with men. But, you know, I don't have anything to do with all this drag queen stuff and this transsexual stuff and all this crazy stuff that's going on these days. Or if you do, I have to because I'm very politically liberal, and that's what I have to do.

But I still want to support the [unintelligible] because, you know, gay men—women have to make a life for themselves, too, and we really support that. It's sort of like the difference between—what was her—Roberta Goldfarb? Roberta—oh, what was her name? She was appointed by—she worked for [President William J.] Clinton in the Department of Housing. She was a big activist here. Roberta, Roberta—and then Carol Migden [spelling unconfirmed], who was a more corporate type.

So I—you know, I still have friends from the old Harvey Milk Club days, and, you know, every- —I think every one of them is as still active and as—you know as, or more further

left than the normal liberal Republi- —liberal Democrats are. Everyone—even left-er than the progressives in this stuff.

MAC NEILL: And just for someone listening to this recording later on, could you just give a quick snippet of what you think Harvey Milk's politics encompassed?

IRELAND: What did they encompass?

MAC NEILL: Right, yeah.

IRELAND: Oh, my God. Well,—so Harvey—Harvey would—Harvey was such an—such a creative, innovative kind of amazing political person. He was just amazing. So, you know, the first—the first thing he worked on was the pooper scooper.

MAC NEILL: Yes.

IRELAND: I was involved with the pooper scooper. And everybody thought he was crazy. They thought, "What a stupid idea!" I mean, generally. He said, "No, this is gonna—this is gonna—we're gonna do something for everybody. Nobody likes to walk in dog shit on the streets. Okay?" Now—now here we are—that was 19-seventy- —let's see, '78, okay? Now you do not see any dog shit on the streets of San Francisco at all, because everybody picks up after their dog. In the seventies, no one did.

MAC NEILL: Could you give, like, a—like, a—just for people who don't know what the pooper scooper—

IRELAND: The pooper scooper was that you had to pick up the shit after your dog shit on the street, and either you picked it—you know, he—the famous thing is him there with the little—little—the little broom and the little kind of shovel thing. Now everybody uses, you know, a plastic bag. I mean, I do when I take Paul for a walk. You use the plastic thing. Of course. But [chuckles]—yeah, that's the pooper scooper.

So then that was the pooper scooper. But it didn't end there. Then there was the Briggs Initiative. And then there was the Coming Out Day. When he said—I remember when he said in the coffee sh- —in the—in his camera store. He said, "You know, we're in the middle of the Briggs Initiative.

Everybody's working hard on getting that defeated." And then he said—he's—just like this—this idea occurs to him. He said, "You know why we don't have any political power? We don't have any political power because nobody knows who we are."

"Okay. Nobody knows who we are. How are we going to change that?" "Come out! Tell every- —tell your family! Tell your parents! Tell your friends. Tell your colleagues at work. Just tell them that you're gay."

And, you know, something—some part of me said, like, *This is really sensible. Of course.* Of course, I alienated my family for ten years, but I did it. And they needed to be alienated, because they were Neanderthals. And out of that came my sister, who raised a gay son with, you know,—where she tells me things like—did I already mention this that Julie? She said—and Toby—Toby says, "You can tell her anything, but not this." And then—and then she'll say to me, "Oh, I so like that French guy and he was dating, but things didn't work out, and we're looking for the n- —" It was, like,—she's, like, as concerned about him finding a partner as she is about her daughter finding a husband. And with as much love and care and affection about him having a really decent, happy life. And this to me is amazing, absolutely amazing to come out of my family.

MAC NEILL: So you've been back to Dartmouth since graduating.

IRELAND: Yeah.

MAC NEILL: What are your impressions on how things have changed?

IRELAND: Well, I told you I went back and was really impressed with some of the renovation work that's been done on the—some of the dormitories. That was quite impressive. And in Baker[-Berry] Library, everything seemed the same except there's all—it's all digitized now. But, I mean, the [José Clemente] Orozco mural is still there.

The new—the art museum on the left side of the Hood [Museum of Art] when you go down—that was a—that was kind of—I thought it was just some sort of dusty old chapel

building when I was there. It wasn't used for anything. And that's a great—great space.

Certainly, the medical center is—Mary Hitchcock [sic; Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center]—is unbelievable. I mean, I was treated there for my broken leg, and they did a great job, but, I don't know, you go down there now, and it's just, like, amazing.

When I was there, the fraternities seemed—I went to Tri-Kap a couple of times. We were there, and we had a reunion of all the—at least seven or eight brothers who were there at Paul [F.] Doscher's [Class of 1966] house, I remember, and we all went to Tri-Kap, and we introduced ourselves to the—as I said, I think they were mostly Korean at that time. They seemed like a really—this was a few years ago. And, you know, it was certainly not the fraternity I was part of. It was much—much better. *Much* better, I mean, I've got to say, it was just amazing. Kind of the welcoming and the openness and more—and more kind of conscious about—

I think Dartmouth has less of a reputation of being a big party school than it used to, because, you know,—what was the famous saying of Dorothy Parker [née Rothschild]? "If all the women in the world were laid end to end at Dartmouth—at Dartmouth Winter Carnival, I'd believe it." [Chuckles.] I think that's what she said. And, you know, whether or not that was true, I think a lot of the guys were trying to live up to that when I was there.

So it was very misogynistic, and—and I think probably having women there has helped a lot. Certainly, the drinking culture is not so pervasive, you know. But when I was there, it was, you know, anybody who was half a man at Dartmouth got slammed on the weekend. You'd start on Friday night. Just like in normal life. You'd start after—you know, at the end of class on Friday and kind of start to sober up at three o'clock on Sunday afternoon. And I participated in that. And at this point, I look on that as an illness. So that's—that's disappeared. I think pretty much it's gone, or at least been discouraged. And that's a good thing.

The academic programs seem to me to be as vital as ever. The right-wing faction there is all kind of like radicalized with

Laura [A.] Ingraham [Class of 1985] and [Dinesh J.] D'Souza [Class of 1983] and whoever else is involved with that kind of right-wing bullshit. D'Souza—what a piece of work!

MAC NEILL: So as my last question to you, what would you say to a current gay student at Dartmouth? Do you have—or would you have a message for them?

IRELAND: Can I talk to you?

MAC NEILL: You can address it to me.

IRELAND: You have—you have a [unintelligible]—a wonderful opportunity. You know, I think if gay—I've talked a little bit about the gay men here, the country club corporate gay guys who want to see us as, you know, totally normal human beings except we like to have sex with people of the same sex. [Whispers.] It's more than that. [Normal voice.] Much more than that. It involves your deepest relationships: your relationship to culture, your relationship to scholarship, your relation to religion and to politics. And gay life and gay identity is so much deeper than that, and it has so much to contribute. And you, by having that present to you while you're doing your formal study and having that be a focus for you—I don't know, something that you're looking at—

Like,—like studying history from the point of view of a gay man. You're going to see things that—you're going to see things that all those breeders out there never saw. You are! You just will! Because you're going to go, *Oh, I recognize that! That's—of course! You know, that's still part of*—and it's not a cultural thing, it's not—it's just part of being gay. And you're going to be able to see that and relate to that and articulate that. And that's a contribution, an amazing contribution.

You know, I—I would always like [John] Maynard Keynes] and Keynesian economics and [the] Bloomsbury [Group] and French writing in terms of [Julien] Green and—what's his name? I'll think of his name in a minute. Wrote about *le fleur*. What's his—anyway, whatever his name is. I can't come up with it. You know, they're gay men, and you're going to go, *Oh, yeah!*

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And there's a certain kind of appreciation that is not available to normalized, ordinary society. It's just there. You can articulate that. You can bring that forward. You can make that part of life and part of being fully human, not something repressed or not some "disordered affection" or something like that, but part of being human. And that's terrific. That's an amazing contribution. So I–I want you to write about that. I want you to study that. I want you to be able to come back and report to me.

MAC NEILL: I think that's a great stopping point.

[End of interview.]