

Andy Foery, '04
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
SpeakOut
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Transcribed by Mim Eisenberg/WordCraft

[SOPHIE M.]

WHITTEMORE: I'm Sophie Whittemore, Dartmouth Class of 2020, and today I'm here in the Rauner Special Collections Library at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, interviewing Andy Foery [pronounced FORE-ee] from the Class of 2004. The date is January 29th, 2020, and the time is 8:30 a.m.

Andy, would you like to introduce yourself and where you're currently located in terms of the building, town, state or basically just where you're holding this interview right now?

FOERY: Sure. Good morning. My name is Andy Foery. I'm a member of the Class of 2004, and I am doing this interview from my apartment in Somerville, Massachusetts.

WHITTEMORE: All right. Thank you. And just a reminder: This project is to maintain an accurate oral history of the LGBTQ+ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus] community at Dartmouth, so please try to remain as accurate and give us full of an account as possible. And, again, Andy, I'd just like to thank you so much for participating.

FOERY: Oh, I'm very thrilled to be a part of this project.

WHITTEMORE: I'm so glad to hear it. Now, just to get a better sense of background, can you tell me about where you grew up? Did you always live in Massachusetts or—

FOERY: I originally am from southern Delaware, a little town called—just outside of Lewes [pronounced LEW-iss], Delaware, which is sort of a small, rural community that gets very popular in the summer because of the—all the beaches and the tourism. And there actually is a pretty—a small but mighty LGBTQ community in the neighboring—especially in the neighboring town of Rehoboth [Beach, Delaware]. So I—I grew up having some sense of LGBT community. And I came to Dartmouth having been out to my family and friends for several years.

WHITTEMORE: And how would you—were there any particular hobbies or passions or talents that you had, growing up?

FOERY: I always enjoyed basically being a gigantic nerd, and so my—my hobbies included board games, singing, music, that kind of stuff. I was very interested in languages. I was a linguistics major—and I—I also really liked reading. Nothing—nothing too exciting, I don't think.

WHITTEMORE: Were there any significant moments you had growing up in Delaware?

FOERY: Well, I mean, I was the first out kid in my classroom cohort. Like, I—it's kind of a long, sad story, but I got outed when I was about thirteen, and there—there were a tough couple of years, but then, you know, more kids started coming out. We started to build our own little community. You kind of get more comfortable with yourself.

So I think that—I think that one of the most notable things of my childhood was that I was out sort of early and traumatically, in some senses, and I was hoping to have less—it might not make a lot of obvious sense, but I—I thought that Dartmouth would be a nicer place to have an existence as an out queer person than a lot of my other potential options.

WHITTEMORE: How did you find out about Dartmouth?

FOERY: This is going to sound silly. I had one of those—it's probably not a thing anymore, but I had one of those huge books that had, like,—it was like a college reference guide, almost? And I knew that I wanted to major in linguistics, and I knew that I wanted a small college, and so, like, they had, you know, organized by majors. And, I'm like, *Oh, they have a linguistics major at Dartmouth.* And I remember walking down the stairs to my parents and going, "Have you guys ever heard of Dartmouth?" And they're, like, "Oh, honey." So that was kind of how I—I came across col- —Dartmouth originally.

And it ended up that when I was looking for—like, when I was doing, you know, the—the touring around various

colleges, I visited—I was able to visit Dartmouth, and at that point, I met [Pamela S.] “Pam” Misener [pronounced MIZE-ner], who was at that time the LGBT student dean. And so that was one of the I think major influences in my decision to come.

WHITTEMORE: And—sorry, one second. What were your first memories of the college?

FOERY: Well, I remember visiting during Orientation Week or—I remember during Orientation Week—well, first I had a DOC Trip [Dartmouth Outing Club First-Year Trip], and there was a guy I was dancing with, and, you know, we were dancing “The Salty Dog [Rag],” as—as you do, and the guy I was dancing with—I’m like, *he seems kind of gay*, and we started talking, and I was, like, probably as subtle as a—as a brick. I was, like, “Oh, my hobbies include theater and gay rights” and [chuckles], or something along those lines.

And he—and he told me that he was gay, too, and it was Donald Jolly, who is another ’04, and he—and he and I became fast friends, and it turned out that we were on the same trip, the “easy hiking” trip. So that was—that was a really good—that was probably one of my strongest early memories of Dartmouth, was meeting another queer person and being able to sort of come into community with them.

That Orientation Week was actually kind of interesting in and of itself because Donald and I were able to connect with a bunch of other LGBT ’04s: Sheila Hicks and a few others. And we—we sort of—at that point, like, there was supposed to be, like, meetings on a certain night, and we didn’t think that there would be any running during freshman orientation, but we went anyway. And there was, like, one student who was there just in case anyone came by. And that was [Timothy] “Tim” Stanne, ’03, I think. And he—he was very surprised that there were so many of us.

And it—it kind of like—as the—as the returning students kind of came back here, like, “Wow, there’s a lot of gay ’4s!” And for—we started jokingly calling ourselves “The Damn Gay ’4s,” because one time Sheila Hicks [Class of 2004] and I were walking back to our dorms, and there was a few people in front of us who were, like, “Yeah, there’s a lot of gay

people!” There were, like, four of us. You know how it is. And they were, like, “Yeah! Damn, there’s a lot of gay ‘4s, those damn gay ‘4s.”

So—but I had been—we were told at that time that there hadn’t been a lot of students who had come as out-of-the-closet people who were just kind of ready to—to pick up and go in the gay community. And, you know, then I met—that same week, I met Doug Mastin [Class of 2004] and a few other—a few other LGBT ‘04s, and we—we started our own little—you know, we found our community with each other very quickly.

And, of course, more people would come along, and not all of us were out at the very get-go, of course. But it was nice, even in that first week, to establish and realize that—that we were—that we had a social scene that we could—that we could participate in.

WHITTEMORE: And you said you met Donald and Tim. You met at a meeting, or—

FOERY: Well, we—we had gone to—we had gone to the room in Robo, which at that—in Robinson Hall, which at that time was not where it is now. It was on the second floor, in hopes that, like,—we had—we had noticed that there was, like, a scheduled weekly DRA meeting, the Dartmouth Rainbow Alliance, which I don’t believe exists anymore, but it was—it was the LGBT student group on campus at that time.

And we went to when the meeting was supposed to happen, so we—and Tim was there in case somebody showed up. And then he was—Tim was really surprised because it was—I think it was me, Donald, Sheila and maybe one or two other people, and he—he was starting to, like,—you know, we had BlitzMail back then. Everyone called it Blitz. So he was Blitzing—it was just the e-mail system. But he was—he was Blitzing everyone, saying, “There’s actually people here! There’s actually people here!”

Also, I vaguely remember there being a bottle of tequila in the cabinets, but I wasn’t a drinker at the time, so—it was a pretty—it was a pretty good first meeting of some of the other LGBT students.

WHITTEMORE: Sheila. Do you happen to remember Sheila's last name, or—

FOERY: Her name is Sheila Hicks. She's a '4, and she lives with her wife and kids down in New York.

WHITTEMORE: And you had a leadership position in the DRA, right?

FOERY: Oh, God, I had every leadership position in the DRA. Nobody else wanted to do it. [Laughs.] Yes. I was—I was president or treasurer of the DRA for probably the majority of my time at Dartmouth. A lot of times I was treasurer because—at least the way it was back then, if you were—nobody else wanted to do it, so I was at one point treasurer of, like, six or eight different organizations just because if you're doing it for one organization, it's really not a big deal to do it for a bunch of them.

But, yeah, I—for the—for the DRA—we really changed the structure in the time that I was there. We had—we sort of started having more meeting offerings. Like, there was—there was a—a couple of meetings throughout the week. One of them was sort of like the general meeting. One of them was more women specific. One of them was more male specific, although anyone of any gender could attend.

And we also for a time had a POC [persons of color] support group as well as an LGBT POC support group.

And then there was also the GSA [Dartmouth Gay-Straight Alliance], which I almost never went to, because it met on Wednesday nights, and I was in Phi Tau, and most of the house meetings were at that time on Wednesday nights, so it wasn't a—it wasn't something that I could easily get to, although I was friends with a lot of the guys that—a lot of the people that were running the GSA. And there—there certainly wasn't any, like, tension or rivalry between the organizations.

I don't think that either of them exists anymore, or at least they've been renamed.

WHITTEMORE: Did you also hold a leadership position in the GSA?

- FOERY: I might have at one point. That, I don't specifically remember. Like I said, it was sometimes if you're willing to be an officer, you can—they'll—they'll take it.
- WHITTEMORE: And you said that the DRA structure has kind of changed over time. Did that affect any of the events you were able to hold during that time, or—
- FOERY: Well, that's why—that's why we changed it. We didn't feel like the current meeting structure was suiting the needs—the needs of the members. And people wanted to have sort of their own spaces, where they could discuss things, so we—we sort of restructured to include these extra meetings that I—that I mentioned, to try to provide more of a support and community.
- And we—you know, we did the—we did sort of our—we had several flagship events that we would do during the year. We did the Drag Ball, which I don't know if they still do it anymore. Like, one year I was the emcee of the Drag Ball. That was an awful lot of fun. And—sorry. And I think that—I think that it was just—you know, I just remember it as being a really—a really fun event to put together.
- WHITTEMORE: I think they still—I think that might have ended up shifting into the event Transform.
- FOERY: I think it did, actually. And—and I do want to mention that I use "they," "them" pronouns, and I identify as a non-binary lesbian, and it—it might sound strange now, but kind of the language just wasn't there at that—at that point. Like,—like, when I was trying to figure out gender stuff, there—there just wasn't a framework for non-binary, and I—I remember struggling with, like, *Am I a guy? I'm not a guy, but I don't think I'm a girl either. Oh, God, this is scary. Let's put it in a box and not think about it for a couple more years.*
- And I—I don't—I don't think—you know, some of the stuff that we were doing at that time I think—you know, I have a much more nuanced approach to gender now than I did, as I think many of us do, so, like, when you look back at, like, *Oh, yes, the DRA women's meetings and the DRA men's meetings*—and—and things like that, it's—it's a little bit like, *Ah, that was really—that was very binary thinking back then.*

WHITTEMORE: Was there ever a space that felt like more a support group for non-binary members or gender-nonconforming members, or—

FOERY: To some extent, there was—you know, a lot of us *were* gender nonconforming. There was—he didn't—he didn't finish at Dartmouth, but there was a—there was a—a member of the DRA who announced that he was trans and transitioned in the time that—that we were there, and that led—that led to a lot of conversations around gender identity that I think were—were helpful.

There as a very, very, very small handful of trans students in my time on campus that were, like, openly trans. And I—I don't know if—people just didn't have the word “non-binary” in their mouths. I certainly didn't.

WHITTEMORE: Did the college at the time make any steps for creating safe spaces, or—

FOERY: Well, we had the—I mean, the safe space that we had was sort of the room in Robinson Hall, and they did—you know, they were doing Dartmouth PRIDE stuff. Like, there was definitely a lot of LGBT programming, certainly, with Pam—with Pam being around. She was very—you know, she was very receptive, and, like, if you came to her saying, “This is something that we think we need,” then she would do her best to, like, make it work.

And we certainly—we certainly tried to, like,—one—a couple of semesters, I worked as Pam's intern, so I—I was—and I also happened to have a summer job at an LGBT bookstore, which is now closed, in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, called Lambda Rising. And because I got an employee discount, I would go buy a lot of, like, books and movies for the LGBT Resource Room [sic; Rainbow Resource Room] in Robinson.

And we were able to, you know, take requests from people and, like, get this—get this media out to people. And I—I do remember making a point of buying books that dealt with gender identity and—and trans topics and things like that.

A lot of those books are still in the library, actually. That was—

[Recording interruption at 17:38.]

WHITTEMORE: All right, so you were describing the Lambda Rising bookstore, in Delaware?

FOERY: Oh, yeah. It was an LGBT bookstore. It's no longer operating. But I worked there as a summer job through most of college, when I—before I started basically living at Dartmouth full time. And I would say, even though I almost never worked there, they gave me the employee discount, so I was able to acquire a lot of our media and materials that I think we still have.

The last time I was up at Dartmouth, I—I stopped by for nostalgia, and I definitely still saw a bunch of the books that I had gotten. Any of the books on the spines with the rainbow stickers that look pretty old are probably ones that I got. [Chuckles.]

And, you know, it—just the—the access to media was so different back then. You know, we were having—we were buying VHS [Video Home System] tapes and DVDs [Digital Video Discs] and—and things like that. And when I was—oh, gosh, either a junior or a senior was when *The L Word* came out. And that just was such a big deal. I mean, lot of *The L Word* hasn't aged well at all, whatsoever, let's face it. I haven't seen the reboot yet, but I want to.

But I convinced—I was in Phi Tau, and I convinced Phi Tau that it was going to be a great idea to get Showtime. And so there was a point in time, like right when it premiered, where there would be, like, forty to fifty people just in the basement of Phi Tau, and we would watch the—we would watch *The L Word* together. And it got to where—like, if they aired it twice in a row—there was, like, an East Coast airing and a West Coast airing, and we would just watch it twice in a row, which sounds silly, I think, in retrospect. But it was, like,—it was such a big deal.

And, you know, it was—it was this weird basement social scene, where everybody would be, like, looking around to

see who else was, like, in the dark basement watching *The L Word* together. And then there was—you know, some people thought it was too crowded, and they had, like, spinoff *L Word* parties, and it was just—it left a big impression on—on—like, *Oh, gosh, this is for us!* It was a really exciting time in that sense.

But, yeah, a lot of the—a lot of the LGBT media at that point wasn't necessarily great. I mean,—as I'm sure you know, it's still not. So we would have a lot of, like, movie nights, where we would watch some train wreck of a movie, just because it had, you know, two guys kissing in it or whatever.

WHITTEMORE: Do you remember any of those movies? Like, any of the titles?

FOERY: Oh, Lord! *It's in the Water*, I remember watching. I remember we watched *Salmonberries*, which is—stars k.d. lang and is just really, really, really, really bad. There's *Go Fish*, which was an early lesbian movie with Guinevere Turner that's just kind of unwatchable. *D.E.B.S.* was a really big hit. It's kind of a spy thriller with two girls who fall in love. Those are—those are some of the ones.

We watched—we watched a lot of *Bound* [1996 film], because it was good and, like, sexy and thrilling. That one—that one, we watched a lot.

WHITTEMORE: And was that a TV series, or—

FOERY: *Bound* is a—is a movie. It's a thriller movie. It was an early film by the same folks who made *The Matrix*, actually. It's a crime thriller. It's quite good.

WHITTEMORE: And you mentioned you visited Dartmouth around what time?

FOERY: I was there for—I was there sometime in 2000 to visit the campus, and that was when I met Pam, and she kind of showed me around and talked to me about LGBT life.

WHITTEMORE: And you also were instrumental in relocating the Rainbow Resource Room. Is that right?

FOERY:

That's correct, yeah. I—well, we got word—we got word that we had the option to move to a bigger space, because we were on the second floor—and I think that it's—I think that we basically swapped offices with one of the magazines. It might be *The Jack-O* [*The Dartmouth Jack-O-Lantern*]. I don't clearly remember. But we had a lot of debate around it at that time. Like, do we want to be on the first floor? Do we want to be more visible? Is this going to, like, decrease traffic to the room because there is not a ton of—of necessarily, like, really out people?

Like, being out on campus was—was kind of a mixed bag. Like, those of us that were, like, very, very visibly out, like myself, Sheila Hicks, Doug Mastin—sometimes it was hard to find the dates, because there was a little bit of guilt by association, so people that were more in the closet didn't even necessarily want to be seen with you if they were really paranoid and worried about their—about their sexual orientation. So some of us that were very visible sometimes had trouble, like,—with that social aspect, although I think that improved throughout.

But—so we were trying to be supportive to, like, closeted and questioning members, but we ended up deciding that taking this space and having a higher amount of visibility was pretty good. And, yeah, I basically strong-armed everybody that I could possibly convince. We—we had to, like, bring all the books down, bring all the resources down.

This is probably something I shouldn't admit, but we had asked for—we had, like, little tiny desks that were attached to the wall that kind of protruded out that are very good if you have, like, a newspaper that you're putting together but aren't really so great when you're trying to, like, have a meeting in the room and people want to sit.

And we ended up—we ended up late one night, a bunch of us, procuring a sledge hammer and knocking down the—those little desks areas, because we had requested it for, like, weeks and weeks and weeks and nothing had happened. You know, we did so at least vaguely responsibly, but we definitely took a sledge hammer to them, took them down, took them out. And then—and then within the next couple of days, Maintenance had, like,—you know,

smoothed over the walls where they were in—we never got in trouble for it, so it worked out.

WHITTEMORE: So alongside the movie nights and also working at that bookstore, how else did you kind of carry over, like, your passions with literature, film and board games?

FOERY: Well, sometimes we—you know, if there was a—if there was a good book, a lot of us would try to, like, pass it around to each other. There was a good—a good word-of-mouth sort of reading network. I remember, like, when some of the Sarah [A.] Waters books came out. I want to say *Fingersmith* was out at around that time. We would sort of pass them around and have—and have talks about books and—and—and things like that.

As far as my passion for singing, in Phi Tau I was very briefly part of an Irish band, and that largely meant we sat around and played drinking songs to each other, with no audience. But it was very fun. [Chuckles.]

WHITTEMORE: And you also mentioned a love of board games. Did that carry over to college?

FOERY: Not as much as I would have liked. All right, that's—that's—well, I was in Phi Tau, and, you know, there was a lot of opportunities to play board games there, but it wasn't as—it wasn't as strong of a hobby of mine at that time, mostly because I was so busy. In between the DRA, Phi Tau and a few of the other student activities that I—that I did—I was in the Medieval Enthusiasts group, I was in the Tang Soo Do Club—there was a lot of activities that I—that I did, so I didn't have as much down time as I would have liked. I mean, who does, in college?

WHITTEMORE: The—sorry, the Times to Go Club?

FOERY: Tang Soo Do. It's like taekwondo, just another martial art.

WHITTEMORE: And you also won the Ezekiel Webber ['00] Award. Could you tell me about it?

FOERY: Yes. [Ezekiel] “Zeke” [Webber, Class of 2000]—so Zeke was a member—Zeke, I met my first year at Dartmouth. We all

knew him. And he became a friend, and he was—you know how you look up to seniors when you're a freshman. He was very much a guiding force in the community. He was really warm and full of humor, and just a very kind, wonderful man.

And, you know, when we—and he had been—he had been very instrumental in the LGBT community at Dartmouth. He had been one of the people that had organized a protest—some protests the year before, or maybe it was two years before, when an anti-gay speaker was invited to campus. And he was very public and visible and very much a vibrant member of the queer community.

And—and his death was very shocking to a lot of us. It—it was was—it felt very devastating, because when the news started to kind of go around that he had killed himself, we—we sort of—I—I think a lot of us had a strong kind of moment where we came together as a community to kind of try to process our grief. And I actually had suggested to—to Pam that we should create an award in his memory, because he had been such a force for organization of the queer community on campus, and I think everybody was in the—in the mindset we had to—that it was—we *had* to do something to—to honor his memory.

And that—that was what we decided to do. So it was—it was me and Donald and Kiva [R. Wilson, Class of 2004], I think, Kiva Wilson, who got that first award the year that it was—I—I didn't—I thought it was a good idea, and I proposed it. I didn't actually think that they would also give it to me. That felt a little bit weird to me in—in some sense because I didn't want to create an award just to give it to myself. But it wasn't—I wasn't the one who was voting for me, so I suppose that was fine.

But it was—you know, it was—it was hard to have those conversations about mental health, and I think we all recognized that we kind of—how much we needed each other. And it was very clear in that moment, and some other—and some other times throughout college, where—where various people were sort of having mental health crises, how much we needed each other.

WHITTEMORE: So you mentioned Pam Misener as being, like, a very strong pillar of support. Did you have any other kind of mentors or pillars of support?

FOERY: You know, it was—it was an interesting time because there weren't necessarily a ton of out—of out faculty, but there—there—there was a lot of administrative support in general for LGBT stuff. Like, they were—they were sort of trying to make an effort.

And, like, another thing that happened in my time there was there was a \$1 million gift given to the college by Roger [B.A.] Klorese [Class of 1977] and David [L.] Haney, who are—and Roger is a Dartmouth alum and—although I forget what year he is. And his—his partner, David. And there was this whole big, like, roll out the red carpet, like, series of—series of dinners and celebrations honoring them and their gift and their—and their contribution that were largely focused around the LGBT community.

So—so meeting them was actually really cool, even though they weren't, you know, faculty or staff but just like, you know, these—these successful people who were, like, “Yes, we're going to make this gift to the college,” and it was—it was a lot of—it was very, very nice to have that as a—as a resource to, like, look to and say, *Okay, yes, there are—there are alumni out there that are—that are supporting us.*

And then Pam's eventual wife, April [Thompson], was a dean at the college, and she was also a good—a good source of support.

There's a few—there were a few, like, other non-faculty members that I remember—that I remember being around, but I didn't—I don't necessarily remember any of their names. It's been a long time.

WHITTEMORE: And—so you were also a part of “Don't Yell the F Word from the Porch” [sic; Don't Yell Fag from the Porch] event. Can you tell me about that?

FOERY: Oh, Lord! Hah! That was—that was an interesting night. I got tapped to participate in it, so it was at AD, which I think is not a thing anymore, right?

WHITTEMORE: Is that Alpha Delta?

FOERY: [cross-talk] They got kicked off campus? Am I—? Yeah. It was at Alpha Delta, which, of course, has the famous [*National Lampoon's*] *Animal House* associations. And he—and it—it—there had been an incident where a member of AD was yelling—excuse my language—was yelling, “Faggot!” from the porch, and this programming was kind of designed to, like, talk about being LGBT on campus, and in the Greek system. And because I was an LGBT person who was in the Greek community, I was invited to participate.

And actually,—sorry, I can't believe I didn't mention him earlier. That was narrated by Michael [A.] Bronski, who—Michael Bronski was the moderator. And he was definitely someone, when he came to campus, that was a very, like, awesome queer person to be able to look to. You know, he's a—he's written a number of books. He's a gay historian.

He came to campus to teach an LGBT studies course that I actually audited. I didn't—I didn't take it as a class. And that—that class was really, really, really just wonderful. And, like, some people on campus threw a fit about it existing, but, you know, he had the support of the women's studies department, and it was a very cool course.

And he tried to immerse himself as best as he could in the LGBT culture on the campus, so he was one of the moderators of that event. And I think that—I—I think that a lot of the—the—it was massively attended. We—like, every—every chair was full. And it was—it got some coverage in the student newspaper as well.

I think that—I think that it was just a moment where people—where, like, our visibility as entities on campus kind of was very high profile.

And I talked about—I remember talking about some of the homophobia in the Greek system and just sort of general invisibility and, like, things like, you know, when you overheard antigay remarks or, like, what—what are you encouraging in your—in the social scene in your house? Like, if you make people have to have dates of the opposite

sex and, like, what does an inclusive Greek house look like? That kind of thing.

It was a very—it was a very interesting night. It got—it got a little bit away from itself in terms of, like, one guy really wanted to talk about libertarianism, and it was kind of hard to pull back from that, but I think—I think that over all, it was a very successful evening.

And they—they did a few more events like it, although I didn't participate in any—in any more of them. It's—in retrospect, I do feel a little bit cynical about it because it—definitely was a little bit of this house trying to rehabilitate their image. And I'm just not sure how many—how many of the Greek houses were making, like, meaningful contributions to address homophobia or how many of them even now still are.

I mean, the co-ed houses, as you might imagine, at the time and still have a lot of LGBT members, and certain—certain fraternities and sororities were known for being much more inclusive, like—like the—one of the—you know, Sigma Delt[a] had a lot of rugby players on it and—and in it, and—and so on. And there was a few other houses that were known for being gay friendly. But, you know, you always wonder if you're—if you're giving people permission to whitewash the uncomfortable parts of their history.

But I did—I did enjoy being able to participate. And I think that it kind of raised the—the profile of just LGBT groups on campus in general.

WHITTEMORE: And you said you were a part of Phi Tau, which is gender-inclusive Greek life. I guess—what was it like, just kind of being a part of gender-inclusive Greek life but also, like, looking into the Greek life scene?

FOERY: It was very gay and very dramatic. Phi Tau at the time that I was there was relatively small. They've always had sort of a small membership, and sometimes membership gets a little low and everyone freaks out. But there was a huge number of LGBT people in—in Phi Tau at that time. Donald Jolly, for example, ended up joining.

And we had—like, people were out to sort of various degrees, but, you know, you were sort of in, like, the gay nerd social circle, which was smaller than either the gay social circle or the nerd social circle, so it led to a lot of interpersonal drama at times.

But, you know, it was the first—it was the first place that I felt really comfortable being myself. And, you know, we talk a lot about, like, how representation matters, but there's also something nice about, like, being a normal person, like, realizing that you're just another person, if that makes sense? Like,—like, that being queer is a really normal thing, that it's not—it doesn't make you some—it doesn't make you some kind of dirty little freak. Not that I mind being a dirty little freak. But do you know what I mean? That not aesthetic of—or that—that sensibility of, like, this is just who you are.

It was the first time that I felt like my queerness was not being looked at as this, like, strange or dangerous thing, and that was probably one of the greatest gifts that college ever gave me, was realizing that, like, there was nothing wrong with me. So just being in that sort of social environment, where I could just exist, and also be openly gay, was—was very liberating to me.

I had—I got—you know the jock wear the—the T-shirts that the Greek houses wear?

WHITTEMORE: Yup.

FOERY: Where you can put, like, your little name on the back? I got a Phi Tau shirt that says, “Lesbian Frat Boy” on it [chuckles], and I—I made a point of wearing it to basically every Greek event that I could, must to make a point.

And we had—you know, we put a rainbow flag up in the window, and that—and that generated a lot of commentary with the Greek community that, were, like, “Is that a problem?” We're, like, “No, it's just in the window.” And it—you know, Phi Tau still hangs a Pride flag out, so—

You know, we—in the time that I was there, like, Tau was the first to be gender inclusive at Dartmouth and the first one to—and the first house to be, like, trans inclusive, according

to our, you know, bylaws and things. So I—I actually, up until this past year, was the corporate treasurer of Phi Tau, but, you know, I'm thirty-seven, and I had been doing it since I graduated, so I was a little bit sick of it.

But I was very happy when they were—when the undergrads were having this conversation about, like, “We need to change the name. ‘Coeducational fraternity’ doesn’t reflect who we are, our values and our membership.” And I was really excited when they did the name change because I feel like—I feel like it’s—it’s important to make it explicit right out of the gate that people are—that people are welcome.

And, again, you know, that—that kind of language just wasn’t common when I was an undergrad. Like, I think that if we had—like, I think that if I had known that non-binary was a thing back in, like, 2002 or 2003 or 2004, that I would have advocated for a name change as—as well. But, you know, the best we could do is say, you know, “We are—we are trans inclusive.” And all of—I think that it— it’s nice to have houses that have—that have that very visible LGBT presence.

I also wanted to mention: Probably—I-d—I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention Peter [C.] Saccio [pronounced SAH-chee-oh], who is retired now, but he’s a renowned Shakespearean expert. And he was probably the most visible LGBT faculty member. And he came to a lot of LGBT events, and he was always very—very kind and wonderful. I—I regret never having taken a class from him.

But I think in terms of, like,—and my life did not revolve around Phi Tau, despite the fact that I’m talking about it a lot. But it was—it was, you know, my home, and think that big—that big sort of feeling of normalization that I felt there was very powerful to me.

WHITTEMORE: I mean, were there any other alternative social spaces where you kind of felt that pull or sense of belonging?

FOERY: Yeah, the DRA, very strongly.

WHITTEMORE: And did you hold any sort of peer adviser roles during your time at Dartmouth?

FOERY: I was a sexual abuse peer adviser [sic; Dartmouth Sexual Assault Peer Advocate program], although nothing much ever came out of it. I did do the training, though, and I was able to help out a few people.

WHITTEMORE: You mentioned there were a couple of protests during your time at Dartmouth. Could you elaborate on those?

FOERY: It was actually before I had gotten to campus. It was a year or two before. There was a—I forget who it was. It was some ex-gay woman had been invited to speak on campus by another group, and there—it had happened the year before I—I attended, so I only ever heard about it second hand. But that was one of the things that I knew Zeke for, was that he had been very instrumental in those—in those counter-protests. I know him and John [M.] Brett [Class of 2000] had done a lot of organizing around that.

So I don't think that—I don't remember there being any big, major major protests that were LGBT specific in the time that I was there. We had a lot of—there were some rallies around, like, consent. And I think—I think honestly, one of the defining moments of my freshman year—and this has nothing to do with the LGBT community at all, but—when I think back to college, one of the first things that I think about was the Zantop murders [Half Zantop and Susanne Zantop]. Are you at all familiar with them?

WHITTEMORE: Vaguely.

FOERY: Yeah. That happened my freshman year, and it was a husband and wife who were professors in the German department, and Half and Susanne Zantop were found murdered, and it ended up being a robbery gone wrong that was perpetrated by two local—two local teenagers. But everyone of course thought that the—that a student had probably killed them, and it made international news. Like, the [Dartmouth] Green was entirely ringed by news trucks from all around the country.

And it was a very scary time because, like, psychologically it was just—you know, you couldn't walk a hundred feet without a camera being shoved in—in your face. And the

dorms at that—up until that point, just were not locked. Like, you could walk into any dorm at any time. And then reporters started breaking in, and they instituted dorm locks. But it was—it was sort of just a very—it was a very scary experience.

And it also was very distasteful in terms of, like, you—you didn't go through that and view journalism in a positive light. It felt very—it felt very predatory. And, like, it's—it's—you know, it's good that those—that those folks were brought to justice, but it was a very—everybody was scared to walk alone at night, basically. You know, Safety and Security was giving everyone rides home all the time, constantly.

And that was—you know, that was a very early thing that happened that—that first year. It happened in the fall, so it was a very—it was a very strange time to be at—to be at Dartmouth that year.

WHITTEMORE: Are there any other outside events that you remember that sort of affected campus life?

FOERY: I mean, well, 9/11 [the September 11, 2001, attacks], where we weren't—we weren't actually in session yet. I was still at home. And we—you know, the semester started up, like, slightly after it had happened. And just the—just the sort of psychological impact of that I think sort of—I think it weighed very heavily on everyone. You know, that was—that was going into my sophomore year that that happened, and that was a very defining moment. You know, the—the newspaper for some time ran obituaries for every Dartmouth-connected person that passed away, and it was a very somber reminder.

I also very strongly remember the [George W.] Bush versus [Albert A.] Gore [Jr.] election because we all stayed up in the Hinman [Hall] dorm (which no longer exists), like, watching election returns. And then a few hours later, somebody was running up and down the hallway, yelling, "It's not over! It's not over! It's not over!" And we all woke up, again, to watch how it wasn't over. And it was this—you know, that was—that was for all of us, the first time that we had been able to vote, so that was not the most heartening introduction to democracy. [Chuckles.]

WHITTEMORE: Were there any other sort of like—

FOERY: Those were the maj- —

WHITTEMORE: Oh, what? No, sorry, continue.

FOERY: Those were the—those are sort of the big things that I remember defining my college years in terms of—in terms of, like, external world events that were pressing down on us.

WHITTEMORE: And just to—

FOERY: And then—

WHITTEMORE: Sorry. Continue.

FOERY: Oh. And then—you know,—so we're right on the border with Vermont, and the civil unions thing had gotten started, and there was a lot of—you know, when you'd go into Vermont, there'd be a lot of, like, anti-gay signs and—and things like that. And—but they—you know, they had started doing civil unions, and so, like, we would sometimes get—I remember we would get visits sometimes from [V. Eugene] “Gene” Robinson, who was an LGBT Episcopal bishop, who came to speak to us several times. And he would—you know, he was sort of a gentle reminder that not—that not every—that not everyone hates us and you can be a religious LGBT person.

But there was a lot of—there was a lot of stuff around civil unions and—and gay rights conversations that were happening at that—at that time. And we were—we were so close to it. You know, sometimes when we would have visiting LGBT people, we would try to—you know, try to find a route to Dartmouth that had the least amount of anti-gay signs on it, that kind of thing.

So it was very much a reminder that, like, things were—that we were very strongly not really full citizens at that point. And, you know, a lot of the discourse was about how, you know, gay marriage would cause the collapse of society, et cetera.

WHITTEMORE: How did this kind of affect just like planning on the DRA? And I don't know how much of that overlap was necessarily the Pride Committee events or anything like that.

FOERY: Well, I remember that we would—I definitely took a couple of trips to, like,— we would try to show up for—we showed up for Boston Youth Pride, and we would show up for a couple—we—we—some of us went to a couple of rallies at the Vermont State House, but it was—you know, it was more of a background noise kind of thing for most of us, just a gentle reminder that we were not necessarily well liked.

WHITTEMORE: And I have to mention it, but social media was apparently just becoming a thing, with Facebook, or TheFacebook.com at the time.

FOERY: Oh, God! I am such an old Facebook user! It started in, like, '04, because it was—it was—it started out at Harvard and then spread to all the other Ivies [Ivy League colleges], and, you know, back then it was college specific, so there was definitely, like,—it was almost a little bit more like a dating site at that time. Like, within your college, you could—you know, you would put up, like, your interests. Like, *Oh, I like kayaking*, and you could click on it, and it you'd see everyone else at your college that listed kayaking as an interest.

For example, it felt—it felt very fun and innocent, which I think we all agree it no longer does. But it was—it was—it made a very big splash my senior year. And, you know, in the time—I never particularly participated in it, but Napster was a big thing, downloading, my first couple of years at college, but then they got, you know, in so much trouble over lawsuits, and the college throttled the connection, and—yeah, Facebook made a very big splash.

But it was very—like, you felt very isolated on campus, also depending on what kind of cell phone network you used, because cell phones were a) clunky and b) like, we were kind of in a dead spot. So most of our—most of our media consumption was—was done on the Internet, but we had the—we had the public Blitz terminals, which people just

used for e-mail, that they would—that were literally all over campus. Like, in every building.

And, you know, I'm—I'm kind of glad they moved away from it. One of the things that happened in my time there was there was a massive pink eye outbreak. Like, a quarter of the campus got pink eye, and the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] got called in. And partially it was being spread because of the computer terminals that everyone was—was using.

But, yeah, Facebook got started senior year, which—you know, at the time, it seemed like a really good way to just keep in touch with everyone after you graduated.

WHITTEMORE: And you were a linguistics major. What drew you towards it?

FOERY: I'm hard of hearing, and I had a lot of speech therapy as a kid, and I just became very interested in the relationship between language and the brain. I—after graduation, I got a master's degree in linguistics and then another master's degree in speech therapy, and I currently am a speech therapist. I work with older adults, so I—I work with, for example, people who have had strokes, who are trying to recover their—their language capabilities.

I was originally thinking that I was going to be an academic, but I didn't like academia as much as I liked, so I went into speech therapy instead of pure linguistics.

WHITTEMORE: Were there any professors who acted as mentors during your time?

FOERY: Yeah. Ioana Chitoran [pronounced ee-oh-AH-nah KIT-or-un], who was also in the French department, was—was a very strong support for me. I did a study abroad in France, and she was our—our chaperone, and she was a very—a very good linguist. I found the whole department was—was full of very nice people. And it was just a really—it was just a really nice, small department, so you could really know the rest of your—the rest of your colleagues.

Also, I really like Timothy [J.] Pulju [pronounced POOL-you]. I remember his class on Proto Indian and European was really, really fun.

WHITTEMORE: Were there any other key figures that were role models you looked up to during your time there, whether inside or outside Dartmouth?

FOERY: You know, I've never been—I've always appreciated having representation and—and role models, but I don't know—there were certainly a lot of people that I admired, but I—I—I don't think that I've ever been—I don't think I've ever been a person that's—that's been, like, *Oh, yeah, I want to be like that person* or—but certainly, I—I had a great admiration for Pam and for other students who I perceived to be living their lives in a very—in, like, a bold, out manner. But I—I don't think that I had, like, a specific hero figure or—or someone that I—that I exceptionally looked up to.

I'm actually looking right now at a photo of the DRA women's meeting of me and a bunch of my friends.

WHITTEMORE: Any names—?

FOERY: And—

WHITTEMORE: Sorry.

FOERY: Oh, yeah, Sheila's in it, Sheila Hicks. Allyson Wendt [Class of 2002, whose last name Andy Foery pronounces like WENTS] is in it. I believe you've already spoken to her. Or someone has already spoken to her. I think she was the one who told me about this project. [Rosita L.] "Rose" Bourne [Class of 2003] is in this picture.

That was another thing that happened. We started—Rose—her family found out she was queer, and they disowned her. And we started, in—in the time that I was there, the scholarship fund, the Bourne's Fellowship Fund [sic; the Bourne Fund] was started, so if you—if you were a student who was disowned for being LGBTQ, that fund was started so that you could have the financial assistance that you needed to be successful at Dartmouth.

Sarah Morton's [Class of 2005] in the photo. She—she was down in New York City now. She works for a—a refugee organization.

And let's see who else is here. Tory Tompkins [Class of 2004] is here. I just went to her wedding, actually, this past year.

And Davida Wegner [Class of 2001] is in there. She lives—she married Molly Butterworth [Class of 2002]. I think they were both '03s. They might have been '2s. And they—they live in Utah with their daughters.

And Freya Sachs [Class of 2004] is in the photo, and then two other women, who were transfer students, whose names I—I don't specifically remember.

WHITTEMORE: And what was life like after graduating Dartmouth?

FOERY: Well, I went straight to grad school, so I was still very academically minded. I moved to Colorado for—I moved to Colorado for grad school. I lived out there for four years, and I was getting my master's in linguistics, so I was still very focused on—on academic life.

I would try to come back to—to Dartmouth those first few years, especially. I would go to the Phi Tau New Year's party. And my senior year, I made good friends with a few '8s that—that I still keep in touch with. And so I—like, a few of them, Carmen [R.] Wegner [sic; Wenger, Class of 2007] and Ricky Hablin [spelling unconfirmed] joined Phi Tau, so, like, I—I—I flew down to participate when they formally joined. Things like that.

Oh, I also wanted to mention: One of the major things that we did that I helped organize, was I organized—a couple of years in a row, I organized trips to Montreal Pride over the summer, which I very heavily recommend as an experience. It's much more exciting than Boston Pride. French-Canadian drag queens are really amazing.

But for a lot of—a lot of people, it was their first, like, large-scale Pride experience, so we would get funding from the college, and we would get hotel rooms, and we would—and

we would go and, you know, watch the parade, and we would also—like, just going to—for the very first time, going to, like, a dance party with, like, almost a thousand other LGBT people was this really amazing and liberating experience for a lot of people, especially if you hadn't ever been out before.

So, like, sometimes people would go, and they would be like, "Oh, my God, this is the best thing ever!" Like, it—it was one thing to have a very small community and it was another to go to, like, this big, major Pride event and see all of these people and be able to, like, see the—the gamut of—of LGBT life I think was really powerful for a lot of people.

WHITTEMORE: How else would you say that just concepts or things have changed since your time at Dartmouth? You mentioned language shifting a lot?

FOERY: Yeah. I mean, I knew that I was—I knew that I was not straight when I was, like, twelve, but it took me until my early thirties just to figure out the non-binary stuff. And I think that if the language had been available back then, it would have made life a little easier. I didn't—I didn't think that "none of the above" was an option, if that makes sense. Like,—like, the way that I described myself as being non-binary, if I'm—if I'm just joking around, is, like, I didn't care for gender's ideas, and I unsubscribed from their newsletter.

And, like, when I—when I was sort of struggling—after Cory [spelling unconfirmed] came out as—as trans, it—it—my first year at Dartmouth, I didn't go by Andy, I went by my legal name. Andy is from my middle name, and I had decided that it fit better. But, you know, when you just—when you announce that you're changing your name sophomore year, like, it was—everybody—especially because it was right after Cory had come out as trans—people were, like, "Are you trying to tell us something?" "Like, no, I don't think I am. I don't think I'm a guy." And I had a big crisis about it.

But then I—I sort of—I didn't realize that—that non-binary was a thing that existed. I thought I had to sort of pick a side, and that wasn't working for me. I know in retrospect it probably sounds breathtakingly naïve, but that was—that was how I felt about it, and that was what—and, you know, it

didn't—it took—like, many years later—like, reading more about, like, gender discourse or—for that to sort of cement in my head that, like, *Oh, yes, actually, you can—you can be a non-binary person. That's a thing that exists.*

I think that was one of the big—that's really *the* biggest shift that I have observed. And also just—you know, you didn't mention your pronouns. Like, that just wasn't a thing. And I think—I think that a lot—at least my own personal understanding of intersections and of oppression I think have—have sharply developed much more recently. But I—I think that the gender inclusive language was a big—was one of the biggest things from—from—from that time.

WHITTEMORE: How have you observed this kind of like shift also happen in campus life? I mean, you mentioned the gender-inclusive housing shift. Are there any other, like, sort of changes you can see on campus?

FOERY: Well, it looks like the [Dartmouth] Pride programming is really robust at this point, and it does impressionistically seem to me like there's a lot more out trans students on campus. And I understand that there is a good number of, like, gender-neutral restrooms, and I—I just think that there's a lot more—I think that it's—it—these concepts are part of a lot more people's day-to-day knowledge, based on vocabulary.

WHITTEMORE: And—so you mentioned that after graduation you went to grad school in Colorado. I guess just what was the shift from college life to I guess a professional world sort of like?

FOERY: Well, I basically had no money and no free time for four years, and my life was very academically based, outside of, you know, vacations to—you know, coming home, seeing my family. It was a very focused time in my life. I didn't—I didn't necessarily have the time or the energy to participate heavily in Colorado's LGBT social scene, which there *was* one.

But I don't—I just didn't have any time. I was so busy with—with school. I mean, I think the difference between undergrad and grad is that, like, graduate school is, like, a very focused, drowning [chuckles softly] experience, where

you are just so immersed in your—in your life. Like, I—you know, I went to CU Boulder [University of Colorado Boulder], which is a massive school. But I barely ever socialized with anyone outside of my department. It was just a very—it was a very sharp change in terms of, like, I had basically no time for extracurriculars. It was a big refocus.

I couldn't read for fun for, like, at least a year after grad school. I had to get back into it as a-as a hobby sort of gradually because I was just so sick of reading.

WHITTEMORE: And I guess is there anything that I haven't mentioned yet that you just kind of remembered? Anything about, like, specific relationships, mentors, events, any iconic moments?

FOERY: You know, it—it was a really nice moment when—when we had, like—we had this whole Pride, like, brunch thing during a time that, like, families were coming to visit, so a lot of us were able to bring our parents to this Pride brunch and being able to, like, introduce my family to my friends and my community like, on Collis [Center for Student Involvement], with this big-ass rainbow flag hanging from the ceiling. Just felt very powerful to me. And, you know, meeting some of my friends' parents and having them realize that we're not actually scary, I think was—was extremely powerful to me.

I also—I also loved just the exuberance of—of building that community—you know, having somebody go from being really scared and—and closeted—like,—like Greta Perl, who was another '4—she started out in the Questioning and Curious group, and then, you know, she got more comfortable with herself and started coming to DRA stuff, and I think she facilitated Questioning and Curious for a little while. And she—now she's, you know, married and lives with her wife in Ithaca [New York].

And—but just, like, seeing people, like, come into them- —themselves, I think. And I—I came into myself in those—in those years, to some extent. I think it was just that exhilaration of watching people realize that who they were was an okay thing to be. I think that was—that was one of my great moments that I loved.

Also being surrounded by Dartmouth students at Boston Pride, you know, chanting, “We’re queer. We’re here. Our parents think we’re studying.” Like, it’s—it’s an adrenaline rush.

WHITTEMORE: And do you have any advice for someone who is just currently navigating all facets of their identity, like, right now, or just going through college?

FOERY: I would—I would say you shouldn’t be afraid to try things on. You know, maybe you want to—if you find those people that make you feel safe and loved, and if you want to try out a different name, if you want to try out a different pronoun, you know, find—find your people. They’re there, and they will help you. They will love you, and they will help you. Find your people. They are out there.

WHITTEMORE: Thank you so much, Andy. I just want to say thank you again for participating in the SpeakOut project. Everything you shared has been invaluable and wonderful, and thank you so much, and just have an amazing week ahead.

FOERY: Thank you. I really, really appreciate you taking the time to do this work. I—I was trying last night to, like, sort of focus my memories of that time in my life, and I—hopefully, I didn’t skip over anything major. I’m really excited by this—this project. When Al Wendt told me about it, I—I knew that I had to participate.

I feel like it was a very tumultuous time for LGBT people and just for the country in general, and I’m—I’m thrilled to see how far things have come, but also, you know, everything still kind of sucks, so you have to keep fighting.

But it’s been really great talking to you, and if—if on a—you know, if you have any other questions or follow-up things that you’d like to discuss with me, I’d absolutely be available to do that.

WHITTEMORE: That sounds great. Thank you so much, though.

FOERY: All right. Thank you. Have a great rest of your week. And, again, I really appreciate you taking the time to do this with me.

WHITTEMORE: Thank you, Andy.

[End of interview.]