

Nancy A. G. Vogeles '85
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
SpeakOut
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Transcribed by Mim Eisenberg/WordCraft

[Caroline W.]

CASEY: This is Caroline [W.] Casey interviewing Nancy [A. G.] Vogeles [pronounced VOH-guhl] for the Dartmouth SpeakOut Oral History Project. Today is Friday, November 2nd, 2018. The time is 10:45 a.m., and we are in the Ticknor Room in Rauner [Special Collections] Library at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

So, Nancy, the first thing I wanted to ask you about is just where you're from.

VOGELES: Mm-hm. So I—well, originally, I'm from a little town in Illinois called Western Springs. It is a suburb of Chicago, southwest of the city. Most people know the towns around it, but not Western Springs because it's only a mile and a half wide. But its claim to fame: In 1976 it was American's Most Votingest Village.

CASEY: [Chuckles.]

VOGELES: It—it was—it isn't anymore, but it was a dry town, meaning there was no alcohol—

CASEY: Oh wow.

VOGELES: —sold, and so nothing ever happened in that town. Everybody went to other towns to make it happen. But it meant for a very quiet—quiet little community.

CASEY: Yeah. So did you have siblings?

VOGELES: Yes, I have three older brothers, [Thomas A.] "Tom", Mark [R.] and Bruce [M.], but Tom and Mark were out of the house when I was, like, six or seven because they were that much older. And so I kind of grew up with my brother Bruce. And then he went away to high school and then came back his senior year, so—

CASEY: And then what did your parents do?

VOGELES: My mom was a stay-at-home mom until—but she was very, very active in the community, so she was room mother, you know, and picture lady and very—very active in our schools, and then she was on the park board, and then she was park board president, and then she was a village trustee. She was the first woman to be president of [Advocate] Good Samaritan Hospital board. And so she was very involved that way and served on other committees.

My dad was a graphic designer in Chicago, pretty well known in Chicago. He died in August, so they're doing a big tribute in a couple of weeks for him. So, yeah—so—and very, very influential in design in Chicago.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: He did the original John Deere logo.

CASEY: Oh, wow.

VOGELES: So that's how—that I tell people, because I didn't know what he did, growing up. Like, "What's a graphic designer?" "Well, he did that logo," so—he told me that helped pay for Dartmouth.

CASEY: Wow. So did you—I guess a few things: Did you like school?

VOGELES: Oh, growing up?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Oh, yeah, I loved school. I mean, I was—you know, I was always the one that when we did around the world with the math thing, I was like totally—totally going to win that thing, you know? So I—good preparation for Dartmouth, you know?

CASEY: And what did you do outside of school?

VOGELES: So we were active in our church, really active in our church. It was a—First Congregationalist [sic] Church of Western Springs. Very liberal church, but it had a lot of great social

things, so, you know, in addition to Sunday stuff, every Wednesday afternoon we had the learning center over at church, and so we'd go after school. And Ruby Schroeder, the minister,—we'd do all these amazing things. And in fact, I was just back there, and—for my mom's 91st, and my wife and I—I showed her all around the education wing, and “There's the darkroom where I learned how to, you know, do photography.”

CASEY: Oh, they had photography?

VOGELES: Yeah, they had—

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: Yeah. And then we learned to bake bread and all—just fun stuff. Those are the two I remember. And then every Saturday morning when I got to junior high, we had Sunshine Choir, and it was a girls'—Sunshine Choir. And it was all mostly secular stuff. But we'd go to nursing homes and hospitals and children's homes. And every day there was a half-day at school, we had Sunshine Choir, so there wasn't other stuff to do.

And then when I got to high school, their youth group, PF, was every Sunday night from, like,—I don't know, it was six to eight or seven to nine or whenever, and we went on trips, and—yeah, so that was—that was a really big part.

And then I played sports, so starting in junior high I played basketball, and then in high school I played basketball and soccer and did some track and got into photography.

CASEY: So—

VOGELES: And then worked, too.

CASEY: Right. Where'd you work?

VOGELES: I worked after school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning, starting my junior year, when I wasn't playing that much sports, at a doctor's office across the street from one of the schools, yeah.

CASEY: And then—

VOGELES: I was a file clerk. You know, that was before things were electronic, so, like, when there was a doctor's visit, then you put the thing in and then you filed it actually back on a shelf.

CASEY: So did you go to a public high school or—

VOGELES: Yes. Yeah, I went to Lyons Township High School. Huge, huge, huge.

CASEY: What—did most of the people you know go to church? Were they all religious, or was that, like, kind of your family—

VOGELES: No, a lot of people went to church, and it was mostly—yeah, it was—that's kind of what everybody did, and even Mary Rosen, who was Jewish, sang in our Sunshine Choir.

CASEY: Really!

VOGELES: So I didn't know till Dartmouth that Judaism wasn't just, like, another denomination. Yeah, it was—very naïve back then. And part of the naiveté was because—you know, how housing went. People just weren't welcome, and there weren't the protections for people.

CASEY: So it was, like, pretty much other families like your family?

VOGELES: Yeah. Mm-hm.

CASEY: And did you know anyone in the LGBT community, anyone gay in high school?

VOGELES: No. Oh, no.

CASEY: Really?

VOGELES: No one would be out. There was nothing like that.

CASEY: Did you know *of* anyone?

VOGELES: No.

CASEY: Or, like, any—

- VOGELES: You know, [Władziu Valentino] Liberace.
- CASEY: [Chuckles.]
- VOGELES: I mean, you know—I mean, you know—I mean, my dad would make jokes about it, you know.
- CASEY: Mm-hm.
- VOGELES: So, you know. And you knew, like, growing up—even if you didn't know what it meant, that it was a bad word. Like, you know, we played Smear the Queer.
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: On the playground or—you know. And if someone called you a faggot—you know, if a boy got called a faggot, like, I didn't know what that meant, but it was bad, you know?
- CASEY: And so was it like that until you went to Dartmouth? Did you have—like, all through high school you didn't know anyone—
- VOGELES: Yeah, No, not one person.
- CASEY: Wow. And so did you know that you were gay in high school?
- VOGELES: So I knew—so first of all, even though it was a liberal church, right?—that it just wasn't questioned that homosexuality could be an okay thing. It wasn't talked about. And in society, it was just not an accepted thing. And so for me, I—it wasn't that I didn't like boys, right? And so I would date, but I also really had strong emotional ties to my girlfriends, and some more than others. And so, yeah, I knew there was something there, but I just thought, *Well, but I also like boys, so I'll just do that*. Even into college, so—
- CASEY: Yeah. And so then how did you decide to come to Dartmouth?
- VOGELES: So I grew up two doors down from the Finkelstons. And Karin [M., Class of 1984]—and Anne [E.] Finkelston—like, one was six months older, one was six months younger—

and Karin decided to go to Dartmouth. So my senior year, when it was, like,—the college counselor told me, “You’ve got to go visit schools.” We set up some visits on the West Coast, but we also came east. And one of the stops was Dartmouth. And since Karin was here, my parents left me overnight, and it was homecoming against Harvard [University] and the bonfire, and you just experienced the bonfire for your second time,—

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: —so, you know, people were just so excited and so passionate. And all the schools were great, but none had the spirit that Dartmouth did. And I just know, *Oh, I’d love to be here.*

CASEY: So did you feel like you’d fit in well at Dartmouth?

VOGELES: Yes. There were a lot of guys, but I grew up with three older brothers, so it was a very—very male, you know, household.

CASEY: Yeah. And so then what—what was it like when you first got here?

VOGELES: So—well, back then they didn’t have the house system, let alone fresh- —first-year dorms or anything like that. And I was fortunate. I got into Hitchcock [Hall]. So I was in Hitchcock all four years. And so that was—because you learned how to pull each other in, and that was amazing because Hitchcock had its own kind of esprit de corps. And the upperclassmen were very good at, on the big weekends, making sure there was stuff to do, and there were parties in the dorms, and—and so you felt like you had really good and solid friendships, you know, in your dorm. And, yeah, I got along great with my freshman year roommate, who was Jewish.

CASEY: What was her name?

VOGELES: Lori [E.] Bamberger. And we had great conversations. Oh, my gosh, we had great conversations—you know, like, in the middle of the night—you know, it was, like, 12:30, so we thought that was the middle of the night, you know?

[Chuckles.] But just talking religion or talking classes. So it was a very—there were great people in that dorm, yeah.

CASEY: Yeah. And so was that where you found the majority of your friends and your social life?

VOGELES: Yeah, first year. Yeah, that was—that's—you know. And—yeah. And when we did go out to frats—because there wasn't the, you know, waiting period or anything like that, and there—you know, I mean, frats had just everything. And we'd go with folks from the dorm.

And, like, Winter Carnival. You know, we—we—you know, back then you did snow sculptures, and so our dorm won, you know, so it was really—you know, we slept on the snow sculpture on the [Dartmouth] Green—you know, just silly stuff.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: So in a way, it was—you know, none of the outer doors were locked. You could c- —you know, just use any ID and card someone's room. Everybody could go to the frats. You know, there was open alcohol. You know, and all that stuff, you think, *Oh, wow, that was wild*. But there was never the stuff—at least I didn't know about it, because there—there—there *were* things happening around sexual assault and things like that, but I never experienced that. And I think part of it was because I had a great dorm group of friends that—we went out together, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: And then also I had this religious community of friends, that we had all these other alternative things we were doing.

CASEY: So when you went out, do you remember where you'd go?

VOGELES: Sig Ep [Sigma Phi Epsilon], because friends were in Sig Ep, and Tri-Kap [Kappa Kappa Kappa]. You'd kind of go up and down Frat R- —you'd go up and down Frat Row [Webster Avenue in Hanover, New Hampshire]. And, you know, I mean, back then, I—I—I was—my freshman year, I was a chubber for winter sports.

CASEY: What does that mean?

VOGELES: So winter sports was a club of the DOC, the Dartmouth Outing Club, and you helped with races.

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELES: So, like,—and, like,—so when there—you know, so when we had something at the Skiway, we'd be there, and kind of be the lines-people on the end, or, like, what I ended up doing—because they had to stay outside and were freezing—I'd, like, bring them— you know, big things of hot chocolate and, you know, let the volunteers get some hot chocolate and stuff. So at the end of the term, we had a party at the DOC House down here, and we—

CASEY: The DOC House?

VOGELES: Right on Occom Pond.

CASEY: Oh, gotcha.

VOGELES: And we went—so we got in front of Robo [Robinson Hall]—we got in a school bus, went to Stinson's [Village Store], bought all their alcohol, right? And then they just had us drive around the Green until it was all gone. And then we drove to the DOC House and, you know, had this amazing meal, you know? And, you know, people were pretty wild, but—

CASEY: So would you say you had fun?

VOGELES: Yeah, a lot of fun, a lot of fun.

CASEY: Good.

VOGELES: But, again, very innocent fun. Like, there—there was drinking, and I didn't always partake in it, you know? I think freshman winter was, like, you know, when I partook most, but then I got involved in different religious groups, and it wasn't like I was against it or anything like that, but I just started hanging out differently.

But we had a lot of fun. I mean, it was a lot of fun in the dorm. I mean, David [M.] Eichman [Class of 1982], who's the '82—he was blast J. Geils Band, and we'd dance in the hallways. I mean just—just fun, crazy stuff.

CASEY: Yeah. And you always felt safe.

VOGELES: Yeah. But, you know, when I—I was in France my sophomore fall, and when I applied for housing, they put me in the River Cluster. My mom said, "She's not gonna be in the River Cluster." And I was, like, "Well, ma'am, you know, it's not like, you know, people get priority." And she's, like, "No, it's—I'm not having her walk from the library at night down there. It's just not gonna happen." So fortunately, something opened up in Hitchcock, and then somebody else then didn't come back, and so a friend pulled me in, but—so there—at least on my mom's part, there was that thinking.

CASEY: Do you know who she talked to about that?

VOGELES: Just someone in the h- —just called up the housing office, you know?

CASEY: Yeah. That's real interesting. And then—okay, so you had the dorm.

VOGELES: Yes.

CASEY: And then the DOC.

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: And then religious involvement.

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: Were those—was there anything else that you were really involved in?

VOGELES: Well, my sophomore spring, I joined a sorority, Alpha Chi Omega because by then,—again, the D-Plan was even more flexible because you only had to go eleven terms, as I remember, not twelve, so that just created so many more permutations that you'd sit with your friend—I mean, you

think it's bad now—like, it would be like, “Oh, my gosh, we're gonna be on again together in four terms” or something like that.

Plus it was very male dominated. I mean, it still is, even though it's 50:50 or whatever, because the institutions just, like, oozed that machismo. But I realized, *I need female space*.

CASEY: So Hitchcock was a result.

VOGELE: Co-ed.

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELE: Yeah. North Mass[achusetts Hall] was all women, South Mass[achusetts Hall] was all men, Mid Mass[achusetts Hall] was co-ed. There were, like, three or four dorms. Ripley [Hall] was guys; Smith [Hall] was girls—women. And so I realized I needed female space. And it was either sororities or the Women's Issues League, you know? Remember how I was saying the Women's Issues League was in Robo? And I really wanted to go, but I was just not self-actualized enough.

CASEY: Yeah. So what do you mean when you say “self-actualized”?

VOGELE: I didn't feel comfortable enough in my own skin to do that when everybody else was, you know, doing—it was alternative, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELE: And Alpha Chi Omega was a place where it had a good diversity of women, and basically you got in if you wanted to be in. You know, it wasn't like some of the sororities that was very, very competitive.

CASEY: And then—so did you know people in Alpha Chi Omega before?

VOGELE: Yes, because they pledged freshman spring.

CASEY: Oh, gotcha.

- VOGELES: So I didn't pledge till sophomore spring, and that was one of the things: I found a lot of my friends were in Alpha Chi Omega already, and so just thought, *This is a female space. I might as well do it.*
- CASEY: Yeah.
- And then, to come back to the Women's Issues League for a second, what were their issues?
- VOGELES: I don't know. I just remember it was women's space, you know? It was prob- —it probably had a lot to do with, you know, fighting for our rights, you know, women in a very male-dominated space. I mean, you know, cohogs. I mean, they used to do—
- CASEY: "Cohogs" is what they used to—
- VOGELES: Yes, a derogatory name for the women. And, you know, every spring the frats would put on these Hums, and it was just, like, disgusting songs that they would sing.
- CASEY: What were they?
- VOGELES: There would be songs that they would make up that they would sing. It was a big competition. It would be on, like, Phi Delt's [Phi Delta Alpha's] front steps or something like that. And it would be, like,—you know, when you see the parties in the summer or the spring, it was—so, you know, different frats would sing songs, yeah.
- CASEY: And so what—what sort of things would they say?
- VOGELES: Oh, just horrible stuff about women, you know, and about cohogs and—you know, I don't remember the specifics, but, yeah.
- CASEY: Yeah. And so then did you feel—
- VOGELES: But you just, like,—if—if the—no one was saying that was bad.
- CASEY: Really.

- VOGELES: Like, the administration wasn't saying it was bad. In fact, I remember some dean, like as part of it or something. I—I—you know, maybe I'm remembering wrong, but it was, like, that was just guys having fun.
- CASEY: Yeah, and so did you get the feeling that the faculty were kind of in the same space? Like, not really being super supportive of the women at Dartmouth?
- VOGELES: Oh, no, I had not—no, I wouldn't say that at all, actually, because my freshman—back then, you had to do English 5, and so mine was with a woman, Mrs. Marion [W.] Singleton, and all we did was read *Paradise Lost*. And so—she was super supportive, you know. But I wasn't—you know, I was just trying to grapple with—like, it was bringing up all sorts of issues around my family, right?
- CASEY: Mm-hm.
- VOGELES: And so she was great around that, because you can't read *Paradise Lost* and not go, *Is this real?* But then also just life questions, and she was great about that. And then I had—I was fortunate to have John [A.] Rassias as my French 2 professor, and so I—I felt all my professors were very supportive, in general. I didn't go to them mostly for things like that, so I didn't know what their stances were, so I guess I—I wouldn't—not have a clue. I would never think to wonder, you know, back then.
- CASEY: So then what about the men in your class? Like, did you see, like, kind of a sexism on Dartmouth campus—like, in an academic setting or mostly in a social setting? People were just kind of—
- VOGELES: Yeah. Usually in the social setting because for me, I can hold my own, right?
- CASEY: Mm-hm.
- VOGELES: Like, I was always the one that won at around the world, so call that aggressive or call that, like, into it, right?
- CASEY: Yeah.

- VOGELES: It didn't—you know, guys didn't intimidate me that way, so—so I—and plus, you know, sometimes you don't see something because no one's pointed it out, right?
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: Or you—so I can't say it wasn't there, but I didn't notice it, I think would be the—the most accurate way of saying it.
- CASEY: Yeah. And so then once you joined Alpha Chi Omega, did you find a strong female community there?
- VOGELES: Yes. And, you know, I found my niche by being the altruism—the philanthropy chair, altruism chair, whatever they called it, so I got everybody to volunteer. And we used to do monthly birthday parties at the Hanover Terrace [Health & Rehabilitation Center], and we used to volunteer at what was then the Upper Valley Hostel [now Maynard House]. And, you know, we'd do ski-athons from, you know, some cause or whatever. And then I was also the Bible study leader. Like, there wasn't an official role, but I always led bible study.
- CASEY: For your sorority?
- VOGELES: Yeah, yeah.
- CASEY: Awesome.
- VOGELES: I know. It was kind of funny, wasn't it?
- CASEY: [Chuckles.] And—and then did you date anyone while you were in college?
- VOGELES: Yes, I dated a couple guys. And then when I got really involved with different Christian groups, it—you know, it was just kind of like everybody hung out together, so I didn't date much.
- CASEY: There wasn't a lot of dating within the Christian groups?
- VOGELES: There was, but it was very down- —you know, down—you know, low key or something like that. I don't remember that

being an issue. Like, a couple of my friends got married right after college, right? So obviously, they were dating. But it didn't—it wasn't on my radar, I guess.

CASEY: Yeah. And so then—okay, so then it just shift, I guess, to your religious involvement—

VOGELES: Yeah, right.

CASEY: —at Dartmouth. Can you describe that for me?

VOGELES: Well, so I—I grew up Congregationalist, so when I got to—and at Dartmouth the [William Jewett] Tucker Foundation, which was what's now the [William Jewett] Tucker Center and the [Dartmouth] Center for Social Impact, all in one—so they had chaplains, and they would send out, like, little half sheet—and back then it was, like, —like—like mimeograph, so, like, if you wrote on it, the second sheet—it would come through kind of thing. It had the different religious groups, and you could check which ones you wanted to find out about.

CASEY: Mm-hm. Before you came to Dartmouth?

VOGELES: Yes, yes. And now they still do that; you just do it online, right? And—and then those people get your information. And so I was going to the Church of Christ at Dartmouth College here, because I was Congregationalist. But it was just on Sunday morning, and I just wasn't connecting, because they were talking about issues of adults, right?

CASEY: Mm-hm.

VOGELES: And then my freshman winter, my next-door neighbor in the dorm, Diane [I.] Bonina [Class of 1985], said, "Come to Mass with me one night." I'm, like, *Pfff*. You know, it was a Sunday night. I was, like, "I'm not Catholic." She said, "Just come," because I think she didn't want to go by herself. And so I went, and on Sunday night it was, like, folk Mass back then.

CASEY: Where was this?

VOGELES: AQ.

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELES: Aquinas House, and so it was just—I tell—I joke—I was either getting hypnotized or I was having some born-again experience, because it all made sense. You know, like, first of all the vibe—because everybody wanted to be there. I mean, it was prime study time, so if you didn't want to be there, you were studying. Like, you would have gone to Saturday night Mass or something like that. And it was a folk group, so there was, you know, a harmonica. Someone played flute. It was all those kind of, you know, heartfelt songs that, you know, people think are tacky, but I liked them.

And—and the students were reading, and then the priest, Father Joe, like, preached on the readings. I never understood that before. I mean, it's not like my church *didn't* do that, but I didn't—I wasn't mature enough, I guess.

And then—and everything led you to have Communion, you know, and it just made sense, and I was, like, *Wow, this is amaz-* —and the priest was so good. He applied it to student lives, right? And he was so in touch with the students, like, you felt like he was talking to you. Like, he was that good of a chaplain.

CASEY: So were there a lot of other students that went to Aquinas House?

VOGELES: Yeah. I mean, mostly Catholics, I think, but, you know. You know, thank you, Diane Bonina, right? So I was going there for a couple of years, and—

CASEY: You just kept going with her?

VOGELES: Yeah, and then just got involved—you know, they—it was great study space because it was open all night, and they always had peanut butter and jelly and hot chocolate if you wanted it. So when—you know, when you didn't want to study at the library or when the library closed at midnight, you'd go there to keep studying. And back then, it was much more open in terms of who could take Communion. Like, the Catholic Church has gotten really, really—much more strict.

And so, you know, Father Joe was saying, “Well, there’s four conditions. Like, you have to be—you know, it’s—it’s not available in your own church.” I’m like, *Congregationalist*. *It’s, like, four times a year. I don’t know when it is.* “You have to be sorry for your sins.” I’m, like, *Of course*. “You can’t do this walking down the street with Coke and an Oreo cookie.” I was, like, *Okay*. And he goes, “And the fourth—oh, I forget the fourth. That probably would have kept you out, but, okay, you can take Communion.” I mean, you know?

CASEY: Mmm.

VOGELES: And so it just was very meaningful to me. And—and the liturgy and that—it—it wasn’t all on the sermon. Like, the sermon was an integral part, but coming up and receiving Communion.

And—and then my—so I was involved for the rest of freshman year and sophomore year, and then sophomore spring, I did commencement and reunions, so I was assigned to Gile [Hall], and I was the lowly housekeeper, so I had to, like, you know, make beds and clean rooms, whereas some— a kid who was in my French 2 class, Elena—she was the key person, so she just kept the keys. It was a total class system back then. We laughed about it.

And so when I would get done, you know, we’d have all these conversations, and she was involved in Campus Crusade for Christ, which is now Cru [Dartmouth]. And she said, “Oh, you should come.” And I’m, like, “Eh.” She said, “I’ll—I’ll—I’ll go with you.” So sophomore summer is when I started going to Campus Crusade for Christ.

And in the summer, there were no, like, adult leaders, and so, like, they passed around a sign-up sheet of who would, you know, be in charge of a meeting—like, get a local minister to come and talk or whatever. And then there was another sheet that went around: Who’s going to bring food? So I thought, *It can’t be that bad, right?*

CASEY: Mm-hm.

VOGELES: And, you know, I was considered the liberal in the group, but I—because I asked questions. But it really—for the first

time—I mean, I loved the church I grew up in, but I never got things explained, right? And so, like, I un- —so I read the Bible for the first time. I started doing Bible studies, right? So all my involvement in—as a Bible study leader in A Chi O was after that, you know. I learned to pray. I, you know, took my faith seriously. Learned about Jesus.

And so if the culture at large was saying, “Homosexuality is bad,” well, you get—you’re in the Catholic Church, and it’s bad, and then you go to—

CASEY: So Campus Crusade for Christ is Catholic?

VOGELES: Evangelical—no, it’s Evangelical. And so then you go there, and they’re actually, like, preaching about it, you know, because they’re taking the Bible literally, you know? And so I was kind of like, *Well, hmm*. And plus, you know, again, I had this—I didn’t have anything against guys, right? And so I just focused on that, and I kind of thought, *Okay, Lord, you know, I’ll just date guys, right?* You know, I was kind of like, *I like apples, and I like oranges, but they told—they are saying oranges are bad. Okay, I’ll just eat apples*. You know, a little bit like that naively.

And then—right, and so that was taking—and then I was—I decided to double major. So that was, like, you know, every class was a major class all of a sudden, so that was taking a lot of time, because it was French and government, because I—I wanted to join the [U.S.] Foreign Service. That’s what I thought I wanted to do. And so I was doing that.

CASEY: And so did they preach, like, directly on homosexuality?

VOGELES: Oh, yeah!

CASEY: Really!

VOGELES: On homosexuality, on premarital sex, on masturbation, on, like,—

CASEY: Really!

VOGELES: Yeah. Oh, yeah, totally. Very clear.

- CASEY: And so at this point in time, were you hearing other conversations about homosexuality and, like, the gay community?
- VOGELES: So who knew who was the gay community?
- CASEY: Right.
- VOGELES: Because it was so closeted. So, like, you know how we were talking about with *The Dartmouth Review*, someone infiltrated the GSA [Gay Student Association], right?
- CASEY: Right.
- VOGELES: And just to have a GSA—you know, I only learned this *after* the fact, but the dean of the Tucker Foundation then, Warner [R.] Traynham [Class of 1957], an amazing man,—so I was super involved there, and I volunteered a lot too.
- CASEY: At the Tucker Center?
- VOGELES: So that—yeah, so that was another thing I was really involved with. So I was a Big Sister. I was—I volunteered at the prison in Wood- —when there was still a prison in Woodstock [Vermont]. I, you know, did Wood Crew. Like, you just did—that was—‘so that was another source of really wonderful people. And that—the Tucker Foundation used to be where Collis is—like, the Collis Café. That was the Tucker Foundation. So it was very visible on campus.
- And so I guess at this time, you know, students wanted to form a group, and the college wouldn’t let them, and so Warner Traynham taught—had it under the Tucker Foundation.
- CASEY: Who’s the dean of the—
- VOGELES: Yes, he was the dean of the Tucker Foundation at the time. Had it under the Tucker Foundation.
- CASEY: Wow.
- VOGELES: Right. And so that was a huge—I mean, a huge thing. And then he also would write these broadsides, you know, and so

he wrote one on homosexuality, which was, you know, for then very supportive. It would be interesting—like, I wanted to come in early and ask [J.] Caitlin [Birch, Dartmouth's Digital Collections and Oral History Archivist] to look it up, because it would be interesting, looking back now, but I just remember it being very sup- —important.

And—and then, you know, *The Dartmouth Review* infiltrates their GSA meeting and then publishes the names, and it was devastating to these students because all of a sudden their parents knew. I mean, it was so devastating.

CASEY: Right.

VOGELES: And so you—and so the people who were out then were either because they couldn't help it—you know, they were the kids that got labeled "fag," I guess, growing up, and they're like, *Screw it, I'll just be out*. Or—and very brave people.

CASEY: Yeah. So do you remember that happening? Like, *The Review* article and everything?

VOGELES: Vaguely, yes. I mean, it's hard when you think about—it's like when you look at a photograph when you're older. *Am I remembering it because it's the photograph that I'm looking at, or do I actually remember that happening?*

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: And so I vaguely remember that. But then, you know, I've read so much about it after the fact that I'm not—you know, I'm not quite sure if all the stuff I remember is because of the articles I read and not just that incident.

CASEY: And that would have been your junior year?

VOGELES: I think so. It would have been sophomore or junior year.

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELES: Yeah

CASEY: So you—I know it's hard to kind of, like, place everything—

VOGELES: Yeah, I know.

CASEY: —in context, but kind of like *The Review* incident and also your, you know, involvement with Aquinas House. Do you remember—was there anything before that that kind of introduced you to—

VOGELES: No.

CASEY: —the gay—so, like, that was—so you didn't know anyone in high school—

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: —with those—like, kind of like your junior year of college—

VOGELES: Yeah, yeah.

CASEY: —your first. Wow. And so—so then when they were doing these—

VOGELES: Like, you kind of—I mean, even when you're closeted, you still have "gaydar" right?

CASEY: Mm-hm.

VOGELES: But because you're so closeted, you don't—you know, I mean, just think when you're, like, starting—if you're just starting to, like bo- —someone of the opposite sex, right? It's awkward, you're embarrassed, you don't know what you're supposed to do, right? And then you got all this social stuff around it that you could get beat up, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: You could get just ridiculed and humiliated. So, you know, there as a lot of self-repression, too.

CASEY: Yeah. So what do you think the—I guess this is kind of hard, since you weren't at Dartmouth, but, like, the combination of Dartmouth being a really masculine place and then also, like, being a gay woman at Dartmouth—

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: What do you think that—how do you think those two intersected? Like, did it make it harder, I guess, to, like,—I mean—

VOGELES: Right. So—so, like, I think it was my senior year. I was at Tri-Kap with a friend, who was gay. I didn't, like,—we never talked about it, right? And I went to the bathroom. I came back. He had been kicked out because "we don't want to get fags here," whatever. Plus, like, my friends—I knew—

CASEY: And who was that?

VOGELES: That was [Stephen A.] "Steve" Carter [Class of 1986], and so he's out. And I knew—like, friends of mine, who now are, like, obviously—but even back then, we didn't talk about it. But I knew my friend, Tony [C.] Pasol [Class of 1982], who then became Tony Campbell, was gay. And he died of AIDS [acquired immunodeficiency syndrome]. And I just remember visiting him years later in a hospice. He says, "I have AIDS. I'm gay." And I'm, like, "I love you." Like,—like, even then, you know, it was—that was in the early 2000s that he—you know, he was—you know, it still wasn't an acceptable thing.

So, again—so there's all these layers, right? There's—there's Dartmouth is a very masculine place, very sexualized—and meaning heterosexual, masculine place, okay? And that is manifest in this Greek system, which back then—I mean, I was shocked when I learned that two-thirds of students affiliate now. Back then, it was a third.

CASEY: Oh, really.

VOGELES: Yeah. There wasn't the—people didn't feel the need. And so—so—but it was still very present. Then you had, you know, these, you know, misogynistic, right?—the cohogs and all of that, right? So you got to go a couple layers to get to the lesbian part, right? Because you've got a very male-dominated—so as a woman, right?—you're—you're navigating that space.

And—and I think, because you can't hide being a woman, that's what you were always dealing with, right?—out there.

And then being—because then, like,—like, my junior year I stopped going to Aquinas House and started going to Edgerton House, the Episcopal center. So I got the liturgy minus all the other stuff.

And—but it just wasn't talked about. And so it was like this hidden thing. So, you know, in Crusade—Campus Crusade for Christ, you know, it was very clear what the do's and don'ts were, and it wasn't really out there, so you didn't deal with it, right?—if you weren't out.

CASEY: And I'd imagine—did it—I guess, like, being somewhere where they're preaching to you—like, you can't, like, know premarital sex—

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: —with anyone of any gender—

VOGELES: Right. Right. Right, right, right.

CASEY: You know, like, I feel like that almost made it or could have made it—

VOGELES: Right, took it off the table.

CASEY: Right.

VOGELES: Right, exactly.

CASEY: Because there's such a focus on not doing anything—

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: —because you're not married.

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: So it was just, like, a very, like, sex—I guess, like, not sex negative—but, like, you know, like, kind of—

VOGELES: It was sex negative.

CASEY: Yeah, yeah!

VOGELES: [Chuckles.] You didn't call it sex negative. Right. They were talking about—and so you just take that energy and do other stuff, right? I mean, you—you volunteer. You get really involved in other things. You have a double major. You—you know.

CASEY: Yeah. And so then when you, I guess, were getting ready to leave Dartmouth, where would you say you were with, like, your sexuality and with religion and—

VOGELES: Right. So when I graduated from Dartmouth, I worked for the Tucker Foundation. I was their first volunteer coordinator, which was a—someone to try to coordinate all the volunteering that happened. And in the—back then, there was no OPAL [Office of Pluralism and Leadership]. There was no Dickey [the John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding], no Rocky [Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy], no Women's Issues League. I mean, there was Women's Issues League, but no, you know, Center for Women's Studies or—or anything like that. So if it was going to happen, it was going to happen through Tucker.

And so Tucker—when I worked for Tucker, they used to put on these retreats, right?—where you'd go to a local inn for the day, and you'd have these really thought-provoking retreats. And I remember one was about diversity and difference. And so they really—they really addressed stuff.

And also that was when the shanties—so the shanties were up, and the students who were involved in that—the dean at the time, James [P.] Breiden [Class of 1956], was kind of like helping them and kind of being their guide and mentor, kind of like—

CASEY: The dean of the Tucker Center—

VOGELES: The Tucker—well, it was the Tucker Foundation then,—

CASEY: Tucker Foundation.

VOGELES: —yeah. Because there was nothing else. Remember, there was nothing else. And so—

CASEY: And could you explain the shanties?

VOGELES: So the shanties were student—so there was a big movement to get Dartmouth in the '80s to divest from South Africa because of apartheid. And Dartmouth at the time was saying, "No, we're going to have constructive engagement." And Bishop [Desmond M.] Tutu, everybody in the resistance was saying, "We don't want your constructive engagement." You know, "We want you to divest." And so there were students—probably involved in Women's Issues League and all the more radical groups—and so they built shanties on the Green and named them after townships, I think, or things—or, like, I think they had one, Biko Hall, or, you know, after [Bantu Stephen] "Steve Biko [a South African anti-apartheid activist]. And so they were just protesting out there.

And this was the year after I graduated, so I was—'86—'85 and '86, when it happened. And so—but anyways—so—so—yeah, this came first. So then they had the shanties on the Green, and we had the first Martin Luther King [Jr.] service ever. And June [M.] Jordan [poet, activist, teacher and essayist] came and spoke, as the keynote speaker. And she writes an essay in a book how amazing it was that, you know, there were these shanties on the Green. She was staying at the [Hanover] Inn. It was, like a beautiful, snowy night.

And then she went to the—you know, she was the keynote speaker at the MLK service at Rollins [Chapel]. And then the next morning, when she got up,—because that was MLK Day, but New Hampshire didn't recognize it or anything like that—the shanties were down, in the middle of the night. They came—students from *The Dartmouth Review* came with sledge hammers, and there were students in their and everything. And so she was just shocked. And the students were devastated, right? And I think one stu- —you know, they got minimal disciplinary action.

And so that was very much coming into the Tucker Foundation, and we had this re- —retreat on diversity, and it was at an inn in Windsor [Vermont], and I remember one of the things was—you know how you do, like, the—OPAL used to do it a couple years ago, where it's, like, you'd be in

a circle, and it's, like, "Okay, if you are male, step up." You know, like that.

Well, the way they were doing it then was, "If you have blue eyes, go to the right," you know? And, you know, "If you have brown eyes, go to the left." Then if, you know,—if you're a dumb schmuck with hazel, you know, you're in the middle, right? Or, "If you consider yourself conservative," "you consider liberal." And it was always: You can be in the middle because those didn't apply to you or you didn't want to say, right?

And then one of the questions was, "Are you gay or straight?" And so I'm, like *Pfff, I'm goin' over to the straight thing, because I'm not outin' myself*. And I remember this one student, who was a senior, was kind of between the middle and gay, right? So I was, like, *Oh, that really intrigues me*. And I always really liked her. She was—she was in charge of Adopt a Grandparent, I think. Just a great person.

And so the biggest thing was getting up the courage to go and talk to her. She lived off campus. And to say, you know, "I think I'm gay," you know?

CASEY: Mm-hm.

VOGELE: And she described herself as bi, and that was the first time I ever said it out loud to anybody.

CASEY: So you went—you went to her apartment off campus?

VOGELE: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. She lived on School Street [in Hanover, New Hampshire]. I lived on School Street a couple times—you know, not at the time. But I just remember going, and that was the first time I talked to anybody about it.

CASEY: Wow. And so that was immediately after this retreat, or—

VOGELE: Shortly thereafter. It was, like, I just remember it being, I think, spring. Again, I could look at my journal, because it's in there—you know, spring of 1986.

CASEY: And were y'all friends before that?

VOGELES: Yeah. I mean, so—she was a year behind me, and so I knew her when we were all students, so then all of a sudden now I'm in this volunteer coordinator role, you know, so—but we were all—like, you know, everybody who, like, volunteered a lot. You were kind of like all in the same group, you know, so I had a slightly different relationship with her all of a sudden. But, you know, when I was talking to her, it was, like, human being to human being.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: And so that was the first time I ever said it out loud and the first time—then afterwards, I wrote it down. But, like, even that—I wouldn't just write it in my journal. I typed it up and then taped it in my journal so that if I needed to, I could take it out.

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: Yeah. So it was that internalized homophobia and shame and thinking it was still wrong. And here was a person who kind of felt okay.

CASEY: And how did she react?

VOGELES: She was, like, "Yeah." I mean, "It's okay." So it was really interesting to have someone a year younger kind of like helping you.

CASEY: Yeah. And did you—did you talk to her a lot about that?

VOGELES: No, just that one time, just that one time.

CASEY: Uh-huh. Did she date anyone at Dartmouth? Do you know?

VOGELES: I don't know. I wasn't there to ask her.

CASEY: So you—yeah.

VOGELES: Yeah. It was kind of like I needed to say something to somebody.

CASEY: Yeah.

- VOGELES: And I knew she was a safe person because she was kind of in that, you know, space.
- CASEY: Right. And then—yeah, and then you never talked again about that?
- VOGELES: No, it just never came up again.
- CASEY: Wow.
- VOGELES: Because she then graduated, right? And then I was there another year, and then I went off to Africa.
- CASEY: And then how—so you went to Africa to?
- VOGELES: I was a Volunteer for Mission with the Episcopal Church [sic; Episcopal Volunteers in Mission]. So talk about, like, you know,—you know, being closeted still.
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: So—and it was—and the thing is, I was attracted to guys. I mean, you know, but it wasn't until I—after Africa, and I was at Yale for graduate school, at the Divinity School, that I totally fell for a friend of mine. And all of sudden, it was, like, *Oh. You know, this isn't like apples and oranges*, right?
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: And I remember telling her, and that was just, like, a huge thing. I remember telling her, and she's, like, "I'm—I'm—I'm so glad somebody loves me, but I'm straight." Like, "How the hell can you be straight?" Like, "How can you be straight?" She's, like, "I am. You know, I am. Touchy-feely, but I'm straight."
- CASEY: [Chuckles.]
- VOGELES: You know, and so I spent my graduate school years kind of working on my sexuality and coming out to myself and then to certain friends and then—but I wasn't out in the church. I remember my spiritual director saying, "You know, if they ask, you have to be honest, but if they don't ask, don't tell."

CASEY: So you told your spiritual director?

VOGELES: Yeah. Right, and he's the one that said, "You know, I can help you figure out where God is in this, but I'm not a counselor. Maybe you should go see this person. And she just came and spoke to us yesterday, Lorna Sorrel [pronounced sore-EL]. She and her husband came to Yale in '69 to talk about sex, you know?"

CASEY: Mm-hm. In '69?

VOGELES: Sixty-nine, yeah.

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: She said they—they would have these discussions—you know, they'd have, like, an event. And so many people came that they had to go to the biggest place on campus, which was the chapel.

CASEY: [Laughs.]

VOGELES: So she said it was really wild, talking about condoms and sex and stuff in the chapel—you know, the Yale chapel.

CASEY: Mm-hm. And so then you went and talked to her?

VOGELES: Yeah, and she was great, because I was trying to figure out, Am I bisexual? Am I—you know, she goes, "Well, you know, you can be bisexual, but if you're dating a woman, everybody assumes you're a lesbian." So, you know, like,—and it was mostly just coming to grips myself, right?—and trying to figure out—like, I remember—even in graduate school I was back up here one summer because I was—you have to do clinical pastoral education units, so I was doing that at the hospital, and I was staying with the priest and his wife in their house.

And I remember one night thinking, "Lord, how can you be calling me to ordination and I'm a lesbian? Like, that just doesn't go together!" Or people won't allow it to go together. But no one ever asked, so I never said—until kind of the fourth year into my first position in Concord [New Hampshire], where I really fell for someone, and, you know,

she was in the community, and we were dating, and so I thought, Why should—

So I told the then assistant to the bishop, who was [V.] Gene Robinson, and he was out. And he said, “Well, congratulations. Let’s go to lunch.” And then I told the bishop. He’s, like, “Great. None of my business.” And I said, “Should I tell, you know, David?”, who was my boss at the church. He’s, like, “Well, you can. I think he’d be fine with it, but it’s none of his business.” And, well, he *wasn’t* fine with it.

So that led to, like, six months of me having time to look for another job. But there *were* no jobs. Like, my friends who even supported—they said, “I can’t hire you because it’ll never get past the vestry.”

CASEY: Wow. So what year was this?

VOGELES: This was ’97.

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELES: And so I—so then I went back to school. I went and got a doctorate. And—at the Episcopal Divinity School, which doesn’t—you know, they—they merged with Union [Theological Seminary] recently. But here was a place that was like the Tucker Foundation. They had intentionally decided to be liberationist, to be green and to be welcoming to LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender]. And anti-racist. So I was, like, *Wow! Where have you been all my life?*

And then I—and so I was out, and I—I decided, *I’m never going to be in the closet again*. But it took a while to—to get good at networking, because that was a very pivotal time for the Episcopal Church. The 2000 General Convention had all these resolutions on sexuality, and so they put them to one special committee, so it was, like, the sex committee. But it was the first time Integrity [USA], which was the Episcopal organization for LGBT life. They always had a Eucharist, you know, one night. And anybody who was either LGBT or an ally was up at the altar. And this was the first time they said, “No, it’s going to be only out LGBT priests, because the church needs to see who we are. And some of the straight

allies, we'd like you to be on the side for, like, prayers for healing for anybody." And so I just remember that was my first convention, and we were all up there, and it made *The New York Times*, it made—it made a lot of news.

CASEY: And so then what did the Episcopal Church decide?

VOGELES: So the Episcopal Church basically decided it's up to diocese, you know?

CASEY: Okay.

VOGELES: And so in my diocese—a very supportive priest, and so I—very supportive bishop, excuse me. So while I was still writing my thesis, there was a quarter-time position. Funny, it's where I am now as the rector. And I—so I applied for it, and I told the priest at the time. I said, "Look, I'm not gonna make a big deal out of it, but I'm never going to be in the closet ever again." He's, like, "I wouldn't want you to."

And so I was there for two years, and in those two years, I got very good at networking, and so I actually had, like, four offers when I left and took the position in Vermont, which brought me back to Dartmouth.

CASEY: So what was it like kind of building a network, I guess, of allies or people who were out—people who were okay, I guess—

VOGELES: Right.

CASEY: —with gay people in the church.

VOGELES: So it was really interesting because when I came out, you know, the—the church hadn't had the conversation yet, and I remember—well, I wasn't out out, right?—at the church. I was out privately. And I remember preaching a sermon. It was on—in John's Gospel, Chapter 9, a man who was born blind. So Jesus is in the synagogue, and it's the Sabbath, and he sees this man, and he says, "What would you like?" "I want to see." And so he heals him on the Sabbath. And so he goes, "Go show yourself to the priest." And so he goes, and the priest, instead of saying, "Oh, my gosh, a miracle has happened! Good for you, buddy. You can see!" they got

all mad, and they said, “There’s no healing on the Sabbath. There’s no work to be done on the Sabbath.” Like, they— “Who did this to you?” And, “Who is this guy?”

You know, they started grilling him. He’s, like, “Jeez, I mean, shouldn’t, like,—like he healed me. Like, that means he’s kind of a god, right?” And they, like, threw him out of the synagogue. And so then he runs into Jesus, and Jesus is, like, you know, basically, “Don’t worry. You’re”—you know.

And so this was right at the same time that a retired bishop, Walter [C.] Righter—when he was a bishop ordained an openly gay man, like, three or four years previous. And so people—you have to have ten people to bring a charge against a bishop. It’s called a presentment. So he had a presentment against him. So the trial was going on, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELE: And my bishop was on it, there was a retired bishop in the congregation who was on it—you know, so it was being talked about in the parish there in Concord.

CASEY: So he was on trial for?

VOGELE: For breaking doctrine, because he ordained a gay man, right?

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELE: So this was in ’96 or ’97. So—so here’s this gospel. I have to preach on it. I was trying to find every other example, but I just kept coming back to that. It’s, like,—because this priest—the parish where he was serving was so alive and growing, and it’s, like, here God is doing a new thing in our midst, and everybody’s all upset instead of, like, Look! The church is alive! Right?

And after the sermon, so many people were, like, “Oh, I’m so glad someone’s talking about it from the pulpit.” And then the—my boss got—this is before I was out to him—they—he got a—like, one e-mail saying how horrible it was, and, you know, I still have that—you know, not e-mail, excuse me. That didn’t exist. One—maybe it did. Did it? Yeah, I think it

did. Yeah, e-mail existed, but it was a letter, you know, and he showed it to me.

So even then, you know,—and I think because there were people on—with a bunch of different views, he was very conflict averse. And he's, like, "No, you gotta"—you know, "I'm encouraging you to seek a new call." Because—like, I was trying to say to him, "But wouldn't it be amazing to show how we can be on the same page and how it's okay, because we're going through this as a church, to have different views?" And he's, like, "You know, it's like dynamite under my chair. I can't do it."

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: Yeah. So by—so when I was interviewing at the parish here in White River Junction [Vermont], you know, in the middle of it, I—you know, I just naturally was talking about being a lesbian, and they didn't take the bait. So at the—towards the end of the inter- —I said, "You know, I told you I was a lesbian. Do you want to talk about that at all?" And they were just—no, they were so focused on—their interim priest had just come out to them, and civil unions had just been passed, and so that weekend, they were going to have her civil union, and they were afraid the Westboro Baptist Church people were going to come and protest. And I said, "No, they—they're not gonna bother with you guys. Just enjoy it. You know, they're not gonna come. Don't worry."

So, you know, it was over this super long time. But the amazing thing was when I got called to the parish in White River Junction, a friend of mine said, "Oh, you should look up [Pamela S.] "Pam" Misener [pronounced MIZE-ner]. She's the assistant dean for LGBT life at Dartmouth." And I was, like, "What? What are you talking about?" He's, like, "Yeah, there's this—there's this office called OPAL, and they have an assistant dean for LGBT life." I'm, like, "You are—gotta be kidding me." He's, like, "No, I'm not."

So I met her, and it was like, *This is amazing!* I mean,—because I really didn't have much contact with Dartmouth when I—after I left, because I was, like, in Africa or elsewhere. And to come back and to see that, you know, there was an assistant dean, that there were several groups

related to sexuality, and that that there was a room for them, and—it just blew my mind. I mean, it blew my mind, that there was pride! You know, like, in terms of self-pride but also the pride celebrations.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: It was just—and it just—it was at this key time, where so much was changing.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: You know and Dartmouth was changing with it.

CASEY: And then when did you come back to Dartmouth for the first time? So you were in White River Junction.

VOGELES: Right. So then—so I was in White River Junction, so I was—you know, Pam was becoming a friend. The—there was an investment committee for—there was a Committee for Investment Responsibility [sic; Advisory Committee on Investor Responsibility], which the Trustees [of Dartmouth College] had formed. It was already—that—the—the—chair of the religion department, [Ronald M.] “Ron” Green, was heading. There was a vacancy, so he asked me to be on it. And it was, like, *Oh, my gosh, there’s a committee that, like, takes all the social resolutions and decides how we should vote for it? This is amazing! Did this exist when I was a student? I don’t think so.*

So it was—it was great, because I didn’t really have any interest in re-engaging with Dartmouth, really. I was just kind of, like, *Eh*. And then there were all these reasons to re-engage. And so that was nice.

CASEY: Yeah. And then when did you get married? You’re married. Correct?

VOGELES: Right. So—well, I’m—I was previously married and got a divorce.

CASEY: Gotcha.

VOGELES: And I had a civil union with my first partner in 2004, I think it was, and then did a lot of work on marriage equality in Vermont in 2008, 2009. I was on the [Vermont] Senate and [Vermont] House [of Representatives] committee for family protection [sic; Vermont Commission on Family Recognition and Protection], which was a weird name for it, trying to decide whether they should have civil marriage or not—you know, the—same-sex marriage or not, which was amazing.

We went around the whole state, and then, you know, that whole thing was just—oh, it was unbelievable. You know, the governor said he'd veto it, and so it passed, he vetoed it, and then it came down to one vote, you know? And the guy who didn't vote for it—so we thought for sure he was going to be a no—overrode the governor's veto.

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: And it was at the very end. He was young. They did a roll call vote, so why? And—because one of the guys who was supportive—his wife said, "Don't come home if you vote to override the veto."

CASEY: Wow!

VOGELES: So he was sick that day. Yeah, so all that.

So then we got married, right? Because you could get married September first, so we got married September first.

CASEY: In the Episcopal Church?

VOGELES: No. That was—

CASEY: Oh, well, I guess—

VOGELES: When we had our civil union, yes. But when we got married, we just had it in our yard, and one of our state senators did it, who was very supportive, yeah. And then that marriage ended in divorce, and so my current wife—yeah, we got married this past year, so—yeah.

CASEY: Oh, wow. Congratulations.

VOGELES: Thank you.

CASEY: And then so—so you were living in the Upper [Connecticut River] Valley this whole time—

VOGELES: Uh-huh. Mm-hm.

CASEY: —since 2000—

VOGELES: Two thousand one.

CASEY: Wow. Did you expect to live in the Upper Valley [chuckles] after you graduated from Dartmouth?

VOGELES: No, I never—I was going into the [U.S.] Foreign Service. I was just doing the thing in Africa to kind of get it out of my system. You know, volunteer, do it with the church; that's great. And then I was going to go in the Foreign Service.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: So it's funny how—you know, as life unfolds, you know, you just—there *is* directionality, right? It's not like you're just passive. But you have to see where is the wave going? Right? And you have to pay attention to, *Well, what's actually bringing—helping me feel alive?* Right? And then you—and things change, you know.

And I was fortunate to be here at Dartmouth for, you know,—gosh, from 2013 to 20—so three or four years, as the director of religious life at the Tucker Foundation and then the Tucker Center. And I loved that. I mean, I loved that. And that Leah is doing Queer Conversations, right? From a spiritual perspective. I mean, it's this whole—it's so nice to see that things *do* change, and—you know, and how important it is when the college steps up. It makes all the difference, right?

When the college started stepping up around women, that's when change started happening, right? That—that wasn't happening when I was a st—an undergraduate. You know when the college—you know, an assistant dean for LGBT life? You know, the Rainbow Room, now the Triangle House?

You know, there was an alum that tried to give I think it was a million dollars to the college, and they wouldn't take it, you know?

CASEY: That's so crazy.

VOGELES: Because it was from a gay man. It was the Carpenter Fund [sic; E. Rhodes and Leona B.] Carpenter Foundation]. And when then-president [James E.] Wright addressed it and rectified the wrong and accepted it and apologized and thanked them, it was huge.

CASEY: Mm-hm. Yeah.

VOGELES: It was huge.

CASEY: And then were you—were you involved with DGALA?

VOGELES: Yeah. So, you know, I was—my friend David—I was on the board, and we had the first official all class reunion, you know, and that was amazing too, to have—because I came to one reunion, and I just wasn't connecting with people. And Pam would always—you know, the assistant dean for LGBT life, Pam Misener—she would do these little events for returning alums. And so I—the rest of the weekend, I was just hanging out with the other queer alums, right? I didn't even go to the rest of my things.

And so when we had this reunion, we—there were people who had never, ever, ever been back to the college.

CASEY: Really.

VOGELES: And so it was so emotional, yeah. And you know how there's all those tour guides, right? So we got students who were LGBT to do a queer tour, and so in addition to showing these alums all the new buildings and stuff, they would say, "Oh, here's a great place"—you know?—"to have"—you know, "Here's where the Rainbow Room is" and "Here's"—you know. And it was just amazing, because I think it was very healing for us alums who were here when everything was so closeted to see young people just—*this is natural. This is*

normal. I don't have to hide anything. And—and just having joy, just being another Dartmouth student.

CASEY: Yeah. Wow.

VOGELES: Yeah.

CASEY: So DGALA—Sorry. I'm trying to—

VOGELES: And so DGALA gets all the awards all the time because we're so active, because number one, we're very organized, and our leaders have always been, like,—you know, like, [S.] Caroline Kerr [Class of 2005] was the president, and Brendan [M. Connell Jr., Class of 1987] was the president, and now Melanie [A. Pastuck, Class of 2011] is the president. They're very good. And they know how to work *with* the administration.

I mean, when I was on the board in the early 2000s—was when—I mean, it's not that it doesn't happen anymore, but less and less. But back then, a student who was Catholic—her parents were, like, more conservative than Opus Dei Catholic. Someone outed her to her parents, and they disowned her.

CASEY: Wow.

VOGELES: And so all of a sudden, like, how was she going to keep going to Dartmouth? And the financial aid was, like, "Well, sorry." I mean, her parents—she's not twenty-six; she's not on her own.

And so the then-president of DGALA and I went in and kind of just wouldn't take no for an answer. And they changed their policy for her. And then we set up a fund that alumni could give to for students in that situation. And then, when she was comfortable putting her name on it—now it's the Bourne Fund [named in honor of Rosita Bourne '03]. And it's been activated every year, unfortunately.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Because it still happens. But I'm telling you, when you put that out to alums, the money comes in, because they—they

know what it was like. They know what it was like. And it's— it's less and less, but, you know, when parents get upset and say, "No, we're not gonna give you any more money," and then the student is, like, "How do I finish my term? I can't go home. Where can I stay over break?" You know, all this stuff. We're there.

And on fun stuff. Like, whenever there's—you know, students *want* to engage with us. I mean, Leah said after Caroline spoke to the Queer Conversations, they were, like, "Are there any DGALA alums gonna be here for Homecoming? Can we interact with them?"—you know?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: And when we're here for our reunion—that's every three years. I think it's going to be this year; I'm not sure. We always have something with the students. And the alums that come back for, like, club officers or things like that always try to do something Sunday morning with the students, you know, And students love it because, number one, we're fun, but I think it's a free meal, too, off campus and—

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Yeah, so I think DGALA serves a really good role for students and for alums. And, I think, for the college, because we're there, you know? We give more money for—you know, and all the money we give, then they'll support LGBT student scholarships.

CASEY: Yeah. That's amazing.

VOGELES: So—yeah.

CASEY: And are most of the friends that you have now—through that friends—people that you knew or knew of at Dartmouth?

VOGELES: Yeah.

CASEY: Or is it people you didn't know?

VOGELES: Oh. See, when I came out, all those conservative Christian friends of mine—they're kind of gone. You know, some of them are okay—on Facebook friends. But that group, which was so tight, is no—wasn't there. And I think many of those people have moved on in their views, but, you know, what—you know, what happened, happened, right? I mean, one even de-invited me from being a godmother so—you know. And tried to tell me, "Oh, but this won't change things." And I had to say, "Yeah, it does change things." You know, that was in the late nineties, or in the nineties. So it's been my DGALA friends, yeah.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Yeah, my DGALA friends. And some sorority sisters. Like, if they're in town and they reach out to me, sure, you know, I mean, you know. But the deep ones are DGALA, yeah.

CASEY: Uh-huh. And so are—

VOGELES: And some of them happen to be, like, frat- —you know, dorm mates, too.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Which is beautiful. So you kind of, you know, can go back to those fun, shared experiences, too.

CASEY: Are any of the people you know now people that were in the Women's Issues League or anything?

VOGELES: I don't know.

CASEY: [Chuckles.]

VOGELES: I know. That would be cool! Like, I should go—

CASEY: Yeah!

VOGELES: —and see if, like, here at Rauner, if they have a list of who was involved.

CASEY: Yeah. They do, I think.

- VOGELES: Oh! So we—I should look at that.
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: It would be, like, *Oh, my gosh! She was involved?* Or I could look at it and say, *I don't know any of 'em.*
- CASEY: [Chuckles.]
- VOGELES: Right? So it was—in one sense, you could say missed opportunity, but in other sense it's, like, *Well, my opportunities were here, and this shaped me, and what do I want to do with it?*
- CASEY: Yeah.
- VOGELES: Yeah.
- CASEY: And so I guess kind of Dartmouth now a little bit. Just I guess what has it been like? What do you hope for for the college? I guess, seeing the changes that have been made and, yeah, just coming back.
- VOGELES: Well, it's hard because—I—I—I can appreciate the complexity because all those alums who were given big bucks are basically the straight white guys from, you know, early on, who liked it that way, right? And from their perspective, what was beautiful for their experiences is being taken away from them—from the students now. And students who are, like, "I don't want that!" Like, "I'm not that!" That's part of the problem, right? Like, "Let's go this way."
- You know, the college has to figure out how to have—create a learning environment that continues to allow students to explore their passion and go out and do good in the world, right? And because a lot of that depends on alumni donations, right?—you'd have to figure out a way to not disparage what was, right?—just—see, because when you say, "This is not acceptable now," "Well, it was acceptable back then, so you're saying what I did was wrong?" See? So you have to kind of like—kind of say, "Well, now that we"—you know. And so I don't envy the college trying to figure out what that message is that allows the older alums—you know, the old guys, right?—to feel great coming home, and

at the same time, demonstrate, “Everybody’s welcome,” right?

CASEY: Mm-hm.

VOGELES: And with all this stuff coming up, right?—and, you know, the Me Too movement, the Black Lives Matter, the, you know, LGBT,—and then, you know, reaction from the right and threatened lawsuits from FIRE [Foundation for Individual Rights in Education], this organization because, you know, “You’re—you’re impinging free speech and we’re gonna, like, say all bad things about Dartmouth,” you know? So it’s, like, how do you hold the system, you know? But God bless them, you know?

So I just have my little thing, alum. You know, queer alum, you know? Who’s a Christian, you know? So I come at it that way, so I don’t have the difficulties or the challenges that others do.

CASEY: Yeah. What about the Dartmouth—I guess like is there anything that you hope for for the Dartmouth community, from, like, a non-institutional perspective, just from, like, a—you know, like, who we are, how we treat each other kind of thing?

VOGELES: Well, like, I heard—so now I have this job in Goffstown, New Hampshire. So we have a home in Manchester [New Hampshire]. We kept our home here. So I’m down there—you know, I come up here on my days off, which is Friday and Saturday—you know, most Fridays and Saturdays.

So when the mass shooting happened at the synagogue in Pittsburgh [Pennsylvania], I heard that there was a vigil on the Green, and when I was the director of religious life here at Dartmouth—you know, when there was the Pulse nightclub shooting—you know, I worked with OPAL, and we had a vigil on the Green. And I think that’s Dartmouth at its best, you know?—that we just let go of differences and really let people know, “We’re here for you, as human being to human being.” You know, and that was organized with the Jewish community and the whole community, and I saw pictures. It was, like, tons of people, and—you know?

And I remember the rabbi at the time when I was the director, [Edward S.] “Ed” Boraz, who’s now taken a position in Wisconsin—you know, his colleagues at Dartmouth [College Hillel]—Hillels across the country would be, like, “My gosh! Like, you don’t have all these problems at Dartmouth?” And he’s, like, “No!” And it’s, like, “So how come you don’t have all these problems?”

Well, I’ll tell you, first of all, Ed was very pastoral, and second, we always worked hard to support each other and to not let political issues over-define our humanity. And he was very, very good at that. And I think if we—if Dartmouth can continue to remember that, right?—and to support that, that it’s not that issues aren’t important and crucial, right?—and injustice isn’t important. How can we not—how can we make sure not to forget every human being’s huma- —you know, our humanity?

And even if we totally disagree with them, to respect them as a human being, right? I think, you know, moments when you see, you know, hundreds of people on the Green with candles, you realize, *Okay, we still got it.*

CASEY: Yeah. Yeah. Is there anything else that you want to add?

VOGELES: No, I think—I think—I think we have—we have—we can’t be complacent, right?

And I think another thing that I learned when I came out was if I wanted allies, I had to be an ally. And so I think DGALA and current Dartmouth LGBT students—we have to be seeing how we can be allies to other groups and other people who are having a hard time. How can we be allies to the women? How can we be allies to students of color? How can we be allies to undocumented students here? How can we be allies to staff? Because staff doesn’t have much power at all here.

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Because, you know, that’s what creates community, too, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: And you can't just think about yourself and your own gains or your group's gains, you have to think about, you know, how to make sure that as our group gains, it's not at the expense of another, right?

CASEY: Yeah.

VOGELES: Or how can we help, as our group gains—and we have a really strong alumni group—where are some affinity groups that are struggling? How can we, you know, be in relationship with them?

CASEY: Definitely. Is there anything?

VOGELES: No. Thank you very much for interviewing me.

CASEY: Thank you so much for coming. I really appreciate you taking the time to do this.

[End of interview.]