INTERVIEW WITH NANCY MCMEANS RICHEY

Katya Ehresman: Go ahead.

Victoria Abad: Talk, talk, talk, talk. Okay, it works.

KE: Sweet.

VA: Okay, so let's start off with ... Go ahead and state your name, and yeah just state your name first.

Nancy Richey: Nancy McMeans Richey.

VA: And the people interviewing are Victoria Abad and Katya ... I don't know how to say this.

KE: Ehresman.

VA: And, we will be discussing a lot of things regarding your position as a Daily Texan editor, during especially a time when UT was going through desegregation and stuff. One of my first questions, I guess that Dr. Green really wanted to know this, was what were dates for the Brown versus Board of Education? And also, what were your opinions on it?

NR: Oh! I don't know those things. I mean, that wasn't while I was here.

VA: Okay. And, were there anything that ... well, actually let's talk about-

NR: Did you read the article that I cited in the correspondence with her?

VA: Yes. The one about Barbra Smith?

NR: Yes.

VA: So, that was an opinion article, correct?

NR: Editorial, yeah.

VA: So, what was it like writing about that article? Where there things that you found that your job told you that you couldn't say in the article?

NR: No.

VA: No? Okay.

NR: No.
VA: That's good.

KE: Was there much pushback from the University of Texan about any things that you wrote, or things that you wanted to write?

NR: I never had any problem with the administration.

VA: Okay. That's good.

KE: Did you have problems with other people?

NR: People who solicited problems, got them.

KE: Okay.

NR: What was your next question?

KE: I guess, as your time an editor, it wasn't just you covering your own editorials. You had to deal with the Daily Texan writers as a whole. Did you see anybody solicit problems? Are there any memories that stand out?

NR: Solicit problems. As I said, no one in the administration, or the school ever said anything to me, except sometimes write me nice letters.

KE: Really?

NR: Yeah. And, let's see. Willy Morris solicited trouble.

KE: Who is that?

NR: You don't know who Willy Morris is?

KE: We have not heard of him yet.

NR: You're now hearing of him.

KE: Good.

NR: He was editor of the year before me. And, Willy was a very ... He was from Yazoo City, Mississippi. And, he was a very good writer. He was socially very sweet. But, it was all about Willy.

KE: What does that entail?

NR: All he cared about was Willy. And, it's been a while since I worked this over. But, as I said, he was from Yazoo City, Mississippi. And, when he died, he lay in state in the Mississippi capital.
NR: And, Shirley Strum Kenny, who was editor two years before me said, "Is the nation so starved for heroes that they mythologize an old drunk?"

KE: Was he a drunk or a ...

NR: I don't know that he was a drunk in school. But, in the end, he was a drunk.

KE: Okay.

VA: That's hard. As your time as the Daily Texan editor, and just on UT at large, where there any issues that you felt were more important to cover, or that people were really pressing you to write about?

NR: No. I mean, no. People weren't pressing me. Willy just took off on tangents. And, he one time run headlines saying he was censored, which he wasn't. And, let's see.

NR: Thoughts leave me. Oh! One difference between the way Willy did it, and the way I did it was I had research done before I wrote on things. And, there was a rule that political speakers couldn't speak on campus at the time.

NR: And, we surveyed the faculty, we surveyed newspaper editors in Texas, and we surveyed ... Who else did we survey? Newspaper editors, faculty. Legislators. And, turned out nobody cared about it. There was nobody out there wanting to have not to have political speakers.

NR: And, can we do something off?

KE: Of course.

VA: Yeah, yeah.

KE: This is your history.

NR: Willy would've hated this. The regents loved me, because I wasn't just throwing firebombs. I was doing research. But, you're not supposed to write that.

KE: We won't. Don't worry.

VA: I'm emphasizing the, "Nancy did her research before writing compared to Willy."

NR: Right.

KE: I guess it was a very political time at UT and the country.
Yes. It was a dangerous time, because of the integration thing. Barbara became a friend in that situation. Barbara Smith. And, she spent a lot of time at my home. My family lived in Austin at the time.

And, she said that the time she spent in our house was the most rest she got in that period.

What was she doing in relation to you? Or what would she talk about more that she had-

Oh well, let's see. Actually, all newspaper editors over the state and I, we all knew that she had ... Well, she was removed from the opera because she was black. And, we all knew that she'd been removed. We were all sitting on the story, because it was so dangerous.

Logan Wilson was the president at the time. And, a reporter from the Houston Post called me. And, he was letting me know that he, Logan Wilson, had made him angry. He thought Logan had lied to him.

And, he was going with the story. And, he was just telling me. And, it felt terrific being treated like an equal to the Houston Post reporter.

I'm sure.

And, let's see. Barbara had not wanted to talk to the press. But, there was a student who was the chairman of the student government human relations committee, whose name was Bobby Jacobs. He was a Jewish boy from Waco, and a lovely person.

And, he talked Barbara into coming to talk to me. And, at the time, I didn't know Bobby. I mean, that's what he thought ought to happen.

And, what resulted was I sat with Barbara for an afternoon in a conference room in the journalism building, helping her write her story.

Oh, wow! You mentioned it was dangerous for you to write about it, and for her to-

It wasn't so much personally dangerous for me. It was dangerous for her, because there was just so much hate, which is amazing.

Were there any actions that acted out on that hate to keep that suppressed, or did she witness anything?

She got a lot of threatening phone calls. And, the director of the opera got threatening calls too. And, it was my opinion that the music faculty was shoving
it. They were trying to get to the end right away. And, I felt like that was not right.

NR: Casting a black against a white male lead, that was just asking for it at the time.

VA: Yeah. I read that in your article. Yeah. I was like, "That really makes sense." They were really pushing it.

NR: Yeah. And, self-righteous.

VA: I like what you had to say when you were saying that just like the arts overall, they just go based off of talent instead of taking into consideration what would happen if they just completely ignored everything else.

KE: Were there any other stories like Barbara's that you felt you wanted to tell, but had pushback or-

NR: No.

KE: Okay.

NR: No, I didn't. Willy would've told you a different story.

KE: Do you remember anything that Willy tried to push, or had gotten push back from because of his fireball?

NR: He thought there was ... Do you about the Texas Observer publication?

KE: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

NR: Ronnie Dugger started that. And, it was my opinion that Ronnie was behind Willy's behavior. And, here's a story about Ronnie. The first night that I was Daily Texan editor, it had taken me and the janitors three days ...

NR: Willy just walked off with his pencil. And, it was just a terrible mess. And, the janitors and I worked for three days getting it cleaned up.

NR: And so, the first night the office was cleaned up, and I had a brandy snifter desk with a flower it from a bush in front of the building. And, Ronnie showed up. And, he took one look in there, and he said, "Jesus Christ!" This was no newspaper office. Oh! I love this story.

NR: And then, pretty soon after that, he wrote an editorial in the Observer saying, "Now that this girl is editor, the Texan was even more censored than before."

KE: Wow! How so? What was his justification for that?
NR: Wait a minute. I'm letting you write. I went around the office. I couldn't find anybody he talked to, that he'd done any research. And so, I wrote an editorial called 'On Slaying Dragons.' And, I just said about what I've said to you all.

NR: And, a vice president of the university wrote, and said, "Dear Miss McMeans, just a note to say I admire your editorial 'On Slaying Dragons'."

NR: And, Ray Faraby had been student body president. And, he was in law school at this point, after that. And, I was at a party at Ray's house that summer. And, there was Ronnie Dugger. And, Ronnie walked across the room to me, and he said, "Nancy McMeans." And, he kissed me on both cheeks. And, we were friends, good friends ever after.

KE: Wow! That coupled with your opponent's slogan ...

NR: A man for a man's job?

KE: Yeah.

NR: That was pretty good, wasn't it?

KE: It was horrible.

NR: And, was it you I was telling the story? Maybe it was somebody else. I don't know if this is for your thing. But, a close friend of mine, I mean he was so close that he loaned my brothers tuxedos, it was that kind of family friend, he worked for Doyle Harold, the man for a man's job guy. And, you're not supposed to write this down.

NR: I mean, we're still friends. Years later, I asked him why he had done that. And, he said, "Because he asked me." Oh! I told you on the phone. An epiphany.

KE: Yes.

NR: He thought I was going to lose.

KE: And, you didn't.

NR: And, I didn't. And, two of his fraternity brothers, he was a Lambda Chi. Two of his fraternity brothers came to talk to me after I was in office, wanted to make sure I wasn't going to hold it against him.

KE: What did they think you were going to do?

NR: Not giving him opportunities on the Texan.

KE: Oh! Was he a writer for the Texan?
NR: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

KE: Okay.

NR: He was an editorial assistant for me at one point.

KE: Oh! He became the assistant now.

NR: What?

KE: He became the assistant.

NR: Right.

KE: Then Doyle wouldn't have had as an assistant.

NR: Who knows what Doyle would've done. He was the kind of guy who ... He was just a low rent kind of person. Don't say that. In the composing room, he would pat girls on the bottom, that kind of thing. He was just a ...

KE: Do you have other memories of ... This is very interesting. Our class is about women's activism in history in post war America. And so, I'm sure you encountered men like that a lot, in a way that was probably less sensory than it is now.

NR: Less what?

KE: Sensory. Like people know now not to behave that way. More or less. Sometimes they do. Do you have any other memories of people like that, at the Daily Texas, or at UT, where things that standout with the way that a female editor was treated?

NR: Let's see.

VA: Oh, yeah. You mentioned, I saw in your correspondence the Miss Dickery and your reaction to that. And, someone was talking to you about what girls that went to university did.

NR: This boy who was ... Actually, he was a man. His name was Bob Wilson. And, it was the summer before I went to the university. And, I turned 21 the month I got to the university, because I had stayed at home and helped the family, and worked in bookstore there. And, working in bookstores is wonderful. I mean, you learn so much.

NR: Now I've forgotten where we were going. Tell me where we were going.
VA: We were talking about your correspondence that you said that the Mrs. Dickery deal and like ...

NR: Oh, yes. So, this man had taken me out. He had a convertible he was very fond of. And, he had taken me out to dinner on Saturday night all summer. And, he worked at the newspaper in Abilene, which my mother worked there is how I knew those people.

NR: And then, he got a job at the Brady Standard in Brady, Texas. And, he was prattling on about that. And suddenly, he had never held my hand, which was fine. But, it became clear to me, he just expected me to go to Brady with him.

NR: And, I said, "I can't do that." I said, "I'm going to the university." And, he said, "Why would you do that?" He said, "Girls only go to college to get a little poise, and you've got that. And, get a husband." And so, here he was. The deal was fine.

NR: And, I wondered. I put it in that. He had gone to journalism school at the university. And, I wondered if it ever drifted over to him that I'd become editor of God know.

KE: He was never editor of the Daily Texan?

NR: Of course not.

KE: Did you feel like there was a lot of pressure in the media for women to stay home or to only go to university for a man?

NR: I think that was sort of just in the social atmosphere.

KE: How so?

NR: I mean, this is what people expected.

KE: Yeah. That's wild now.

VA: Yeah.

KE: Our former project was just looking through magazines and newspapers from the '50s.

VA: Like one of the magazines I read was the Ladies Home Journal. And, a lot of the ads were women being at home. And, one of them was like a lotion ad saying, "Oh! She has soft hands, both because she works at home so much and washing the dishes. But, she needs to have soft hands for her husband."

NR: Oh, yeah.
VA: Did you read a lot of those kind of magazines. How did those make you feel at the time? Like seeing those sort of articles.

NR: The only women's magazines I read were when I was a very small child. And, the one thing that stayed with me was there was a feature in that. It was probably the Ladies Home Journal. It was called 'this is a watch bird watching you'.

NR: And, this isn't about women. And, it was directed at children, like behavior. And, I still tell people there's a watch bird watching them.

KE: That is fun. Always using things that you remember from childhood. It's like good and stuff. My grandma always said things from her childhood. I think she actually used to say like watch bird watching you or something of the like.

VA: What exactly does watch bird watching you mean specifically?

NR: Well, it's like if you're not ... I mean, this is probably not a real example. But, like watching you to see if you're washing your hands. I mean, it was behavior things.

VA: Okay.

KE: Is there anything from your time, because this is supposed to your history that you want included in the [inaudible 00:24:15] Center. So, do you have any other memories or stories from your time as editor, or about student activism that UT that you would want archived?

VA: What was one of your first articles that you wrote, actually, about as an editor?

NR: One of the first ones was 'On Slaying Dragons.' And, I don't know if this fits this. But, it's just a memory from that time. The campus was so ... There were 13500 students when I came. And, last year, there were 16500. Those are numbers from memory, of course.

NR: And, why am I telling you that? Well, maybe it will come back.

VA: Of course. You said 16000 the year prior to that year?

NR: The year I was editor was 16500.

KE: Have you been to campus recently and seen how much it changed?

NR: Oh, yeah. Right.

KE: Are there any landmarks at UT that kind of stand out to you from your time there? Like things that you remember want to go back and see?
NR: I think this building is now the geology building that was the journalism building. And, it's [inaudible 00:26:05] and 24th Street. And, that building has engraved in it, [Latin 00:26:15]. Truth conquers all. It was from when it was the journalism building.

KE: Wait! I think I've seen that building. And, I've read it several times passing by it.

NR: You've read that?

KE: I think, because I know that it's the one that has beautiful mountain laurel flowers right in front of it. And, every time single time I look at it, especially with the mountain laurels blooming, I'm like, "Oh! That's a good ..." especially because I took Latin. So, just reading it, I was like, "That's a good comment." But, I didn't know it was the journalism building.

KE: Were there time at UT ... What was your major again at UT? Other than English.

NR: English and Journalism.

KE: Journalism? Okay. Was there a class that you took that was especially prominent to you that you really loved at UT?

NR: Yes. The Latin element in the English language was a classics course.

VA: Did either of your sons go to UT?

NR: No. Crispin, my older son, went to the University of North Carolina. And, that's where I went to graduate school. And, I didn't think of this until quite later. But, it eventually occurred to me that probably if your mother was always wearing a Carolina sweatshirt, seems like a very safe place.

KE: That's fair. Never wear a Texas sweatshirt?

NR: I wasn't big on the long horn theme. But, don't say that.

KE: Of course.

NR: And, let's see. And, David went to Oberlin, in Ohio. And, they both went four years to the schools they chose. And, I thought that was lovely, to stay with one place. And, they both were very happy with where they went.

NR: And, North Carolina, I was telling somebody recently, that the social atmosphere there is lovely. And, this person knew the territory out there. And, he said, "Yes, if you're white."

KE: That's fair. Did he give any examples of as to why it's like only if you're white?
NR: No. I understood what he went. I'm sorry.

KE: Of course. Yeah. The '50s. Did you see any examples, yourself, of that like only if you're white? Did you personally any of them?

NR: No, because really, I didn't see many colored people there. And, I'm not sure they could go to the University of North Carolina when I was there. I never thought of that till now.

NR: But, it's amazing to me how men got to be on top in society. And, is it just because they were physically strong, or is it because they ... I had another thought.

KE: It's a good question. I still ask myself every day.

NR: Do you?

KE: Yes.

NR: Yes. It's amazing. And, maybe partly that women were burdened down with children. But, don't write this down.

KE: Don't worry.

NR: But, that thought went away.

KE: Hopefully it comes back. I think it's important women being burdened with ... That's what my research off the editorials and newspapers was about, was working mothers and the social pressure to not go to college or not get a job because you have to stay home with children. And, that does impede your ability to climb social and economic ladders and stuff.

VA: Yeah. My project on that was on the comparison between the beginning of the '50s and the end of the '50s, on these magazines and what they were pushing these women to do. And, it was interesting because in the '50s they were pushing more of them to be dating, like it's cool to date and stuff.

VA: But then, by 1959, they were talking more about children now, because baby rumors were coming out. And, they were like trying to push, okay, not stay at home. Like leave the home because you need to take care of your children now.

NR: Really, still?

VA: But, it wasn't so much anymore geared towards the husband. It was more geared towards having a happy environment for these children. So, that was really interesting to read about, because now it was no longer making the
husband happy. It was more like, "Yes, make the happy so you two can stay together and make sure your children grow up properly."

NR: My former husband lives out at Dripping Springs. And, my son who lives here has been wonderful to him. And, he's not in as good health as I am. And, my son, Crispin is gay and married. And, they found a receipt for a storage place for my husband. And, it was full of old books and insects, and disagreeable.

NR: And, there was this book, the title of it was "you can be the wife of a happy husband." I mean, it must've been about sex, don't you imagine?

KE: Probably. Most books with that title are. Did you feel like those books were written a lot when you were graduating college, or they were kind of pushed on women to read?

NR: Oh, no. I mean, that was a recent happening. It was just like this year.

KE: Wow! Speaking of being a wife, or after graduating college, did you feel like there was expectations for you not to get a job, or not to go into a professional field?

NR: Let's see. I stayed home with the children by choice. That was important to me. I'd had a terrible childhood. And, I was going to see that they didn't.

VA: Did you see any of your friends that were especially like that? Like after they graduated college, they were pushed to stay at home more, and not get a job? Did you see that within your own friend group?

NR: Did I see that what?

VA: In your own friend group.

NR: No.

KE: Bob Wilson would probably have wanted you to.

NR: I have a lovely friend who's half my age. I go to Barton Springs, almost every day. Did you see the video?

KE: I haven't watched all of it. She watched all of it.

VA: I watched all of it.

NR: And, we met in the water, this lovely young man. And, when he's town ... He has a very successful business. But, when he's in town, he takes me to the pool. And, that's been lovely. And, seems like there's one more thing. Oh! He talks about Bob, now that I told him that story.
KE: Pleasantly or?

NR: Teasingly.

KE: Okay. Did you talk to Bob after he went to Brady?

NR: Actually, he came to Austin and took me to things for a while. He was still hopeful.

KE: That you would leave, and?

NR: Yeah. Just come to Brady.

KE: Men!

VA: Were there any organizations that you were a part of, other than being in the Daily Texan, that you joined during your time at UT?

NR: I was an orange jacket. Do you know about them

VA: Oh! I didn't know that. Wow!

KE: They're having their week of women events right now.

NR: And, orange jackets was a stepping stone to motor board. Motor board's great expectations were higher. And, I was a motor board. And, I had been stunned to find some of my motor board friends supporting Trump.

KE: That is terrifying.

NR: Right. For year, every year, everybody contributed a letter to a group letter. And, that's kind of slipped by the wayside. But, two years ago, we did one. And, there was this ... This just gets me.

NR: This one woman wrote, and this is a religious family. She wrote that they were supporting Trump. She said that proudly. And, she said ... What was the other thing? "We just wish the media would report more honestly."

KE: As a former editor, how do you feel about that?

NR: Well, I mean, they're just objecting to the truth being exhibited.

KE: They want to think it's dishonest.

NR: Yeah. Right.
KE: That's crazy. I know now, at UT, there's a lot of political conflict, with the young conservatives and the university democrats.

NR: Oh! Are there some Trump supporters at the university?

KE: Oh, yeah. Quite a few actually.

VA: Did you see on one, last semester? It was on Kavanaugh. And, they just stood in West Mall, the young conservatives of Texas. And, they had signs that said, "Confirm Kavanaugh." And stuff. And, it was a whole ...

NR: Wasn't that disgusting?

VA: Yeah. It was very shocking. There was a lot of people. And then, there's this one ... I forget who she is.

KE: Lilian?

VA: She was like ripping up his board. And then, he had some-

NR: You mean some student?

VA: Yes. He, the guy that was holding the board, had the audacity to say, "You're assaulting me. You're assaulting me. This is assault." And then, she was like, "This is an insult to that. Are you serious?" It was very heated and insane. I watched it all.

NR: You were present?

VA: Yes. I was just walking to class. And, I saw it. And, of course I joined the many people that were standing around it. And, it was just ... Police officers started coming. And then, I think the dean of students, I forget which one it was, he was just standing off to the side, watching it all happen.

NR: And, what do you make of that?

VA: It was like, if you're the dean of students, you should at least be trying to just separate every it, because obviously it's not going to end well on both sides because if anything those police officers are going to come in. But, you're just standing there watching it happen, not saying anything or doing anything about it.

KE: The woman ripping the sign was a woman of color. So, it basically-

NR: It was another factor here.

KE: Yes, of course.
NR: And, the sign was?
KE: It was from the conservative side. Like, "Confirm Kavanaugh."
VA: Yeah.
NR: Oh! That Kavanaugh thing was just amazing. And, his behavior in that hearing was just amazing.
VA: The parallels between that and Anita Hill are all so just atrocious. Speaking of surveillance and policing of protests on campus, do you remember any that stand out as UT was in the middle of this integration desegregation process?
NR: I don't have any clear memories of that. I think there were some protests about Barbara being excluded. And, interesting to me is that, I think, she had a much better career because of the notoriety.
KE: That's sad, but fair.
VA: You said you spent time with Barbara, and she stayed with your family, correct?
NR: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
VA: And, she got better sleep. So, what's she like as a person?
NR: Well, I was just struck by the grace she displayed in that whole thing. And, she even came back to the university when they were ready to have come back and perform. And, I think would've been easy not to, I think.
NR: One time, she was in town. And, I ran into her. I didn't know she was in town, at Whole Foods. And, she came home and had supper with me. And, that was really nice.
VA: Have you all stayed in touch much since then?
NR: She's dead.
VA: Oh, no.
NR: Yeah.
VA: That's heartbreaking. She's a legend. And, yeah.
NR: What? What did you say?
VA: She's a legend. I think we read about her in class, right?
KE: Yeah.

VA: I think she meant Professor Green had wanted me to talk to her. That's why. But, I think it's in one of the books that we read.

KE: The rag wasn't out when you were an editor, the Daily Texan wasn't-

NR: No.

KE: As an editor, do you look fondly on what The Rag was doing, as a newspaper of students?

NR: Let's see. You mean later?

KE: Later, yes. Of course.

NR: Well, it was interesting, yeah. It was interesting.

KE: How so?

NR: It didn't have a big impact on me.

KE: Did you feel like it was needed, or something like that underground was needed at the time that you were in journalism? Or did you feel like you had the liberty to say all of the opinions and thoughts that you wanted to?

NR: No. I felt that way, yes.

KE: Okay. That's interesting. We are reading a lot of The Rag articles. And, it was interesting how a lot of them spoke about needing to be underground because of their writings about free contraception, or birth control.

NR: They did that? I didn't know.

KE: Yeah. They did a lot of ...

NR: There was the Austin Historical Center at the public library. Within the last year, there was a program on The Rag. And, they had some of the people who had written for it there.

KE: Oh, wow!

NR: They do good things there, at the History Center.

KE: They do. I think Dr. Green has talked a lot about them, or maybe about this program on The Rag as well. She's suggested a lot of what I'm supposed to look at.
They had a book they had done. And, I bought a couple of them, and gave them to people from that era that aren't here.

NR: They had a book they had done. And, I bought a couple of them, and gave them to people from that era that aren't here.

KE: Do you keep in touch with other people from UT journalism, or any other women specifically?

NR: Yes.

KE: Were you all close as ...

NR: Well, the woman who said, "Is the nation so starved for heroes," she is one of my closest friends. And, she had an amazing career. She started out as an English professor, maybe at Maryland.

KE: That's insane.

NR: Isn't that something.

KE: Yeah.

NR: She was amazing.

KE: That's wild.

NR: Oh! And, she's the one who, I think it was in the correspondence I sent you, when I won after the ... She gave me the brass printers rule that a had a nun for a nun's job.

VA: That's pretty clever. Yeah. A nun for a nun's. What was it like running for ... Other than the man for man's job part, how was it like running for the actual editorial?

NR: It was exhausting.

VA: Exhausting how?

NR: Well, it's just physically exhausting. And, one thing that just was so amazing and gratifying to me, people just came out of the woodwork to help me.

VA: Really?

NR: Yeah. It was amazing. And, I'm trying to think of examples of that. Oh! The man who was my campaign manager, Bud Mims, he was a good friend, but he was also going to run the next year. And so, he was learning.

NR: And, people which you have no connection with show up. I mean, it was just stunning.

KE: Did you feel a lot of political backlash with people thinking it was a man for a man's job and taking that very seriously?

NR: Well, I guess not, because of the way so many people helped me that I didn't know. And, of course I think, surely anybody with good sense knew this other guy was a creep.

VA: And, how do you spell your campaign manager's name?

NR: It's Bud, B-U-D. Mims, M-I-M-S. He went on to work for Business Week.

KE: Oh, wow! That's really cool. Were there any other organizations on campus, not that you were a part of, but ones that seemed to stand out more? So, like now we have the Young Conservatives and the University Democrats that are very kind of prominent and polarizing.

KE: But, are there any that you remember that kind of were a staple to UT political life?

NR: Well, there were the Cowboys. You know about them?

VA: I think they're still ... Are they still around?

NR: I think probably so. And, Silver Spurs. Those were the two. Like Orange Jackets, Mortar Boards, those were the two men's organizations.

KE: How was the political climate at UT? Did you feel like the students were more accepting of the desegregation efforts, or integration?

NR: Yeah. I think probably so. I haven't thought about it that way. But, yes. Probably so.

KE: More liberal than a lot of Texas was at the time.

VA: UT has always known to be more liberal.

NR: What?

VA: UT has always known to be ...

NR: In Austin, yeah. The blue star in the red state. Where did you all grow up?
VA: I grew up in Round Rock.

NR: Well, right here.

VA: Yes.

KE: Same, actually.

NR: Did you know each other in high school?

KE: No.

VA: No. I went to Westwood High School. And then-

KE: I went to Westlake actually.

VA: Oh! The other west.

KE: Yeah. I competed against against Westwood a lot in debate.

VA: Oh! You probably have met some friends then. The debate team was very, very prominent.

KE: They are. My roommates were in the debate team at Westwood.

VA: Oh, really?

KE: Mm-hmm (affirmative). [crosstalk 00:50:32]

VA: Yeah. Another time, another time.

KE: So, you said your family lived in Austin. Did you grow up here as well?

NR: No. First 12 years in Michigan.

KE: Oh, wow! Where in Michigan?

NR: Sandusky. It's 90 miles north of Detroit.

VA: Okay. Because my dad is in Novi right now.

NR: He's where?

VA: Novi.

NR: Michigan?
VA: Yes.

NR: I don't know that place.

KE: Do you go back to Michigan a lot?

NR: No.

KE: Good. It's cold.

NR: Good. Let's see. And, we lived about 20 miles from Lake Huron. And, that was lovely, beautiful.

KE: Better than Barton Springs?

NR: Different.

KE: Different. Fair.

VA: So, on your video, you said that you started going to Barton Springs in the '50s. What was Barton Springs like during the '50s?

NR: Well, you could see a dime at the bottom off the diving board.

VA: Wow! You cannot do that now.

NR: Yeah. I said in that video that the first time I ever went to Barton Springs, I thought it was the worst place I had ever been because it was so cold. And, a boyfriend took me there. And, that was a one-time experience at the time.

NR: But then, in 1968, my husband and I, and the boys were little then, like eight months and four, and we moved to Stratford Drive, which is above Barton Springs. And, that's what turned me into a swimmer.

NR: I would take the boys down there. And, we would sit in the shallow end. And, over time, as they got older, I would swim a little ways away. And then, a little further. And then, one day I surprised myself swimming to the dam.

NR: And, one time, I used to think that 29 degrees in the air was my breaking point. And, one time when that was true, when it was 29 degree, I was the only person. It was like February. And, I was the only person in the water.

NR: And, a Statesman photographer came down, and took a picture of me and talked to me. And, the cut line with that picture was, "Elsewhere in town, folks went sledding."

KE: Is 29 the cut off-
NR: What?
KE: Go ahead.
NR: Oh! The social life at Barton Springs is wonderful. And, if you meet somebody there, you know one good thing about them. They're there.
NR: And, a friend I made there, Jill Carr ... As I said, I used to say 29 was my breaking point. But then eventually, there's so many factors. The sun, the wind. The only time I didn't go was when the roads were iced over, and I couldn't get through.
NR: And, one time the roads were iced over. And, Jill called me. She liked in Westlake at the time. And, she said, "You want to walk to the pool?" She walked to my house on Statford from Westlake. And then, we walked to the pool. And, when we walked back, she had beautiful blond hair. And, she had icicles in her hair.
KE: I know. How cold was it?
NR: How cold? Cold enough that the roads were iced over.
VA: And, icicles in your hair.
KE: I can only imagine.
VA: What was the social climate when you first went? Other than the fact that the water was cold, was there anything that, social climate wise, in terms of Barton Springs, when you first went?
NR: No. It's just lots of interesting people.
KE: That's Austin.
NR: Yeah.
VA: That's how I felt when I first went a couple of years ago.
NR: What you thought was?
VA: So, there were so many people at the time, because it was summer, so everybody is there. And then, there's people tanning over there, people covered up in a towel over there. And, it's like very open. That's what I really liked about it.
VA: I was kind of shocked when a woman was topless. And, she was coming out of the pool to announce like, "Oh! Guys, you can do that here too?" And, she's like, "Yeah. You can do whatever in Barton Springs."
NR: What? People don't often do that anymore.

KE: Did the use to do it more often?

NR: Maybe. And, there was a daughter of a friend of mine who did that routinely. And, I really admired her when on Labor Day, when there were a lot of strangers there, she wore a top. I felt that was very thoughtful.

VA: For the kids.

KE: Are there any other stories that you want included? Or how does it feel being included in archive of women [inaudible 00:56:50]?

NR: The History Center did an interview with me. And, I can't think if there was ... And, how I got included in that was Crispin and I were at a fundraiser for the History Center, at a restaurant, a couple of Christmases ago.

NR: And, they hadn't put an RSVP on the notice of the things. And, there were only about four of us there. And, the director of the History Center was there. And, we sat with him and talked. And, I told him a few stories. And, he invited me to do that.

KE: Wow! It's an important history of Austin, that's for sure. Was your friend on of the first female editors at the Daily Texas?

NR: She was the fourth.

KE: Okay.

NR: I was the fifth. And actually, the first women that became editors was in World War II when most of the men were off at the war.

KE: I bet UT was just full of women at that time. I can only imagine. It would be a better place. I know the '50s had a lot of post war activism, and antiwar movements after that. Did you feel like that happened at UT as well? Kind of after the war, not wanting to go back.

NR: I don't remember that.

KE: I guess that shifted to one of the racial issues anyway. Different things to be active about.

VA: What would you say was your mindset at the time, at UT?

NR: My mindset?
Like with regarding the political climate at the time. How do you personally feel about everything that was going on?

Well, that editorial shows how I was feeling about that.

It's interesting that you say there was no administrative backlash for you writing pieces like about Barbara Smith when UT was one of the last to actually fully integrate.

Oh! It was?

It was. It was the first to desegregate, last to integrate, I think.

Say that again.

It was one of the first to desegregate, but last to fully integrate.

And, it was the first in the South?

Yes.

Yeah.

So, it's interesting that there weren't as much backlash against your writings about these strong racial issues on campus when they had everything from not fully integrating dorms. I think it was Duren or-

[inaudible 01:00:19]

Kingsolving

What was true at Kingsolving?

That it was still segregated. What was the thing? It was still segregated.

Oh! And, there was just a little frame house on Whitis, where the blacks lived. That's right. That's where Barbara lived.

Oh, really? Did she ever speak about that kind of environment not being included in dorms on campus or anything?

No. Actually, I don't have a lot of information on this. But, there was, among that group of black women, there was a lot of hostility among them, because I think they thought she was getting a lot of attention.
And, there was one student there who one time I picked Barbara up, I was driving, and she, this deranged student, threw a rock at my car, because Barbara was in it. But, I think that was just an unfortunately behaving person.

Did you feel like the students in general were more integrated socially?

Probably so. It wasn’t a big issue.

I’m not sure if you clarified this earlier. But, you mentioned that when Barbara stayed with you and stuff, you said that was the best sleep she ever got. What was the-

Best rest.

Best rest. What was the reason being why she didn’t get a lot of sleep again?

This thing was just roiling. And, there were death threats on her.

So, she felt more safe in your home?

Yes.

Understandably.

Understandably. A way from campus, I’m sure.

Yeah.

And, that deranged student throwing a rock, was that one of the only times you witnessed being around her, being so close, a physical violence?

There were horrible phone calls.

Did you get any at the Daily Texan after writing that article?

I got some at home. There was this horrible person that would call like it's 7:00 in the morning.

Gross.

But, I don't remember any particulars of that. But, that was very disagreeable.

Of course. You don’t want to awake that early.

By a disagreeable phone call.
KE: Yeah. At all times that would be bad. But, especially then. That just means they're awake thinking about this horrible thing to them.

NR: You're right.

VA: Do you have anything better to do, [inaudible 01:03:38] eat breakfast first before you call me.

NR: That's cute. Go eat breakfast first.

VA: And then, think twice.

KE: This has been great. So, I guess do you have any other ... Since this is your memoir, and your archive, anything that wasn't included in the History Center that you wanted to talk about, or wanted included about your life? Because this is going to be recorded and transcribed. Anything else that you would like to be told about you?

NR: Would you like see what the History Center did?

KE: Of course.

NR: I think it's somewhere here. All these things, like that video, I had washed my hair before those young women came. And, I didn't think about what it was ... You don't think about what it's going to look like. And then, it hadn't revived. It was still dump and just sitting there.

NR: And, there was one picture towards the end, which looked better. But, you just don't know that to plan for.


NR: Just had a cut yesterday.

KE: Oh, really? I need to get mine cut.

VA: I just did. I don't have time for the ends to go away.

KE: I feel like spring break. Do you have any other photos like of the rock in your car, or anything from UT that you want-

NR: What is this? This rock being thrown at me?

KE: Oh! I mean, no. Just photos or any pieces and history that you would want included in this.

VA: Do you have any photos with Barbara Smith by chance?
NR: No. What am I looking for? Oh!

VA: Oh, wow! Awesome. [inaudible 01:06:58]

KE: Yeah.

VA: Do you mind if I take a picture of it?

NR: Not at all.

VA: Oh, yeah. Elsewhere in Austin, folks went sledging.

NR: That is the photographer who took that picture. And, he was just a sweetheart. Oh! He asked me to get in the water, I did. He asked me to do this, and do that. And, I did. And, in the end, we done with the showers part.

NR: And, I could tell he was through. And so, I just kind of waved and was getting out. And, he said, "Wait!" He said, "I want to hug you." He said, "It was fun working with you."

KE: I'm sure.

NR: And, let's see. I ordered some pictures, including that one. And, they came in the mail. And, I opened it, and I was looking for the invoice, and there was just a note that said, "Enjoy." He didn't charge me for the pictures.

VA: That's so nice.

KE: I love Austin.

VA: Austin is filled with so many nice people.

KE: True.

VA: That's why I never want to leave.

NR: What?

VA: That's why I never want to leave Austin. I just love the environment here.

KE: I love it. It's so great.

KE: I think those are all the questions I had. Let me go check my notes beforehand.

NR: You have notes on that little thing
KE: Yeah. We took some before coming here. Things we wanted to make sure we covered.

KE: There was one part of UT that Dr. Green said he basically wanted us to ask about. Interfaith group meetings at the Y. Did you ever...

NR: No. I didn't do the Y.

KE: Because there was apparently one near campus back in the '50s, right?

NR: There was what?

KE: A Y near campus, or on campus?

NR: Oh, yes. It was on Guadalupe, right about ... Let's see. You know where the sign now about that other religious group?

KE: Oh, yeah.

NR: That's where the Y was.

KE: Oh, wow! That's really close to campus.

NR: Oh, yeah. And, it was a big factor in campus life.

KE: How so?

NR: A lot of people went there. And, I mean, I didn't happen to. And, they had things like ... I can't remember this perfectly. But, there was a debate between ... Do you know who John Silber...?

KE: I've heard the name.

NR: He was a big factor. And, Joe Matthews was ... I don't know what his credentials were. But, the Christian faith and life community, you know about that? No? Anyway, those two men had a big debate about something at the Y.

KE: Yeah. The other questions were I believe after you graduated. Yeah.

VA: Yeah. I think those are ...

KE: Yeah. Those were all after graduation.

NR: My husband and I drove from Austin to Buenos Aires.

VA: For what purpose?
Why were you doing this? It was after we got married. Oh! Go over and read my United Carbon certificate. That was my first job after I got married, and after I finished.

What was that job like? What did you do?

I was the assistant to the PR guy. And, it was like going to see a wonderful friend every day. He was just wonderful. United Carbon was a provincial company in West Virginia. Isn't that West Virginia? Yeah. Until went national, and it had a big office in New York.

And, there were two offices in Houston. One was downtown in a bank building. And, once was suburban. And, we were the suburban office. And, it was the perfect job. He didn't care what I did as long as the work got done.

What type of work did you do?

I produced an employee newspaper.

Are there any articles from that that stand out to you?

No. It wasn't very interesting. It was pictures of a carbon black plant workers. But, I want you to read what he wrote on my certificate.

Where could we find ...

It's on the wall.

Oh! That's what you meant.

Can I take a picture of this?

Sure.

What did he ...

Read it to her since she's sitting down.

I can see it.

This is to certify that during the course of her employment at the United Carbon company, Nancy Richey tried really hard.

That's a cute certificate.

Did anybody else try real hard and get that?
NR: No. That was done for me. And, he even went to the trouble of getting a gold sticker.

VA: Wow! So official. That's so nice.

KE: How long were you working there?

NR: Not long. A year or so. Then, we went on our trip to South America.

KE: How long were you in South America?

NR: We took eight months. And, we could've done it quicker. But, we stopped here and there.

KE: Of course. I mean, I would be six months instead. What did you do in South America?

NR: We just traveled.

KE: Anything stand out?

NR: One of my favorite times was ... I love the shore of the Peruvian coast. And, there were sand dunes as tall as office buildings. And, I rolled down one.

KE: Wow! And, I'm sure sand got everywhere.

NR: Yeah.

KE: That's so fun. What did you guys do after you left Buenos Aires?

NR: We had intended to sell ... We had a Jeep station wagon. And, in Mexico, we had what we called a people trade made, which was an open box that went on top of the station wagon. And then, frames pulled out of that. And, a tent went over them. So, we slept on top of the Jeep a lot.

KE: Oh, wow!

NR: Yeah. And, now I've forgotten my next thought.

KE: It happens to me also, especially in class. Sometimes Professor Green will ask a question. And then, I'll forget the question quickly. But, she going down the row. I think everybody asking, "What's the question again?"

NR: Is she a good teacher?

KE: Oh, yeah. She's a great teacher. We're not just saying that because the recording is on. She's great.
NR: I know. Think about the recording being on.

KE: She's a really good professor. And, the class is just so important.

VA: Yeah. So incredibly interesting. Like I accidentally read the 'Where the girls are' book. Yeah. One of the books that we were reading class, instead of another book that we're supposed to read. But, it maybe me realize my appreciation for media history. And, how that affected everybody else during certain time periods, especially for women in post war America.

VA: Where you a part of [inaudible 01:17:00] at the time?

NR: No. I think I wasn't the right age. I'm not sure.

KE: Was there a band or social org or something that you really got into?

NR: No. Number one, I was 21 when I got to the university. And so, I didn't do those things. And, I worked really hard.

KE: You mentioned that you worked 30 hours a week while also being no college. Where did you work?

NR: It was at the bookstore across from the union.

KE: That's right. Yes.

NR: Hemphill's bookstore. And, I worked in trade books there. But, I was also the relief cashier. And, in those days, students paid, I don't know, it was a dime or a quarter and cash a check for them.

NR: And, I think that had something to do with my winning the election. I knew some of these students from cashing their checks.

KE: I mean, they wouldn't want to upset you cashing their checks or it didn't go through.

NR: Well, I wasn't working there anymore.

KE: True. Did being editor take a lot of your time?

NR: Oh, yeah.

KE: I'm sure. My friend's actually editor this coming year. He just won the election, or he ran unopposed. But, he's rather looking forward to it.
NR: There was a later editor after I was editor who his name was Carl Howard. He wrote a summary of the editors of the Texan. He referred to me as mild mannered Nancy McMeans.

KE: Do you feel like that's accurate?

NR: Yeah.

KE: What did he write about the guy before you?

NR: Willy?

KE: Willy.

NR: Oh! I'm sure Willy got a better end than that.

VA: How do you spell the name of the bookstore that you worked at again?

NR: H-E-M-P-H-I-L-L-S. And, there's maybe an apostrophe for the S. I don't know.

KE: I think so. Was it a local one or?

NR: Yes. There were three. One was across from the Union. One was at 26th Street, and one was at 21st Street.

KE: Is one of them still around?

NR: Really?

KE: I feel like I've heard that name. Maybe it was just another something Hill Bookstore near Austin.

VA: I don't think it's across from the union.

KE: Yeah. Probably became an apartment building.

VA: Yeah. Everything's turning into an apartment building now. Everywhere I turn, construction. Going to be a skyscraper kind of ...

KE: What was the housing like when you were ...

NR: Oh! I had a room in a rooming house at 2500 Nueces. And, it had been the home of the landlady. She'd grown up in that lovely old house. And, I had the only room on the ground floor. They were all girls.
NR: And, the rooms, except for one on the ground floor, they were all on the second floor. But, I got the one on the ground floor, which was wonderful. And, it had its own bathroom.

KE: That's always a plus.

VA: Lucky you. Yeah.

NR: Yeah.

KE: Did you stay there all four years?

NR: Three. She sold it. And, it is now a co-op. It's been a co-op for years not.

VA: Yeah. I think I walk-

NR: Whitehall.

VA: Yeah. I walk by it, because one of my friends lives at 2400 Nueces, that tall one. And yeah, there's that house that's right behind.

NR: It was just a charming place. This is not for the thing. But, there was a bookstore where Dobie Mall is now. It was on 21st and Guadalupe. And, a man named ... You're writing this down?

VA: Oh, sorry. Out of habit. That was out of habit.

KE: Yeah.

NR: [inaudible 01:21:41] Pope. He was an old Austin society family. And, I met him because I applied for work there when I first got to town. And, he did all himself. But, he became friend.

NR: And, in those days, people weren't so serious about locking doors at night. And, I was asleep one night, at 11:00. And, he came, and walked in, down the hall, banged on my door, and he said, "Come Nancy, let's go get a beer." He was drunk. And, he just wanted somebody to talk to. And, he had no malicious intent.

NR: But, I went with him. I was really asleep. "Okay! I'm coming." And, I don't even drink beer. And so, let's see. We went to Dirty Martins. And, I don't drink beer. But, I think I had a lime aid. And, as I said, he just wanted to talk to.

NR: And, I used to order books from him, because I liked doing business with, even though I worked in a bookstore. And, he mailed the books I had ordered to me. He was embarrassed. And, I just went by and paid him for them.
NR: And, he said, "If I ever do anything like that again," he said, "just hit me over the head with a beer bottle."

KE: And, did you?

NR: No.

KE: No?

NR: And, he never did anything like that again. He had a very morose disposition. And, when I sold my house on Statford Drive, the real estate agent I had had known him and his family. And, I think he was a teenager when this happened.

NR: He was driving with her aunt, the real estate lady's aunt, in his car. And, they were hit by a drunk driver, and she was killed. And, I really think that's probably what set his disposition. That's a terrible thing.

KE: Yeah. That's horrible. But also, such a small world.

NR: Isn't it?

KE: Yeah.

NR: My husband had a cousin who a had a theory that the reason for these small would encounters is that the educated middle class is smaller than we think.

KE: That's probably true.

NR: Isn't that a nice theory?

KE: Yeah. I'm sure even in Austin people that all stay together.

NR: Yes. There's a sort of a river of people that know each other.

KE: Yeah. Have you found any other people like that? That you from your time at UT, or just accidentally ran into them?

NR: Oh! I just did my will. And, the lawyer I got was one who'd come to your house, which was nice. And, he and I knew a ton of people together.

KE: It's like the Facebook mutual friends but in real life.

NR: What?

KE: Facebook gives you mutual friends you know together.
In the beginning, what I believed about Facebook was that I was never going to do it. And then, in the mid '80s I worked at night at the Daily Texan, the resident growing up. And, that was a sweet job. And, yeah. So, you can put that in.

Well, what happened was my one Muslim friend, he'd gone to New York and he'd changed jobs, and I lost his email address because of that. And, a mutual friend said he's on Facebook. So, I thought I would get on Facebook just long enough to find him. And, zoom! And, that's that.

And, the very first day I was on Facebook, a half a dozen of what I got was mid '80s Texan kids wanted me to be their friend, and I was sunk.

So, are you still on Facebook?

Oh, yeah. And, it's the only way I see my nieces and nephews, that sort of thing. I think it's wonderful. I'm sorry about the bad things they did. But, that hasn't affected me as far as I can tell.

True. It's exciting that your grandkids are coming tomorrow.

They're coming Tuesday, and it turns out at midnight.

Oh, no.

That's so late.

Are they taking a Lyft to get here?

They're renting a car at the airport.

Good. [inaudible 01:27:12]

What are you muttering?

Yeah. I got to learn more about what's the deal with Uber.

You don't believe us, huh?

I didn't know. I'm just completely unaware.

Uber and Amazon have just liberated me.

Really?

Oh, yeah. It's been wonderful.

You don't use Amazon either?
NR: I do.

KE: Okay.

NR: No. I do. And, when you don't drive, running around to get things, you can do that.

KE: But now you can Amazon Prime something to you, and it'll get there.

NR: Yes, right? Something was delivered only this morning.

VA: There's even the Amazon Prime Now, where you can get it within two hours.

NR: Yeah. I don't think I've ever done that.

VA: It's very helpful.

NR: Have you done that

VA: Yeah. I was desperate need of lady stuff. I got my time of the month. So, I was like, "When none of my friends are in town? I really need it right now." And then, two hours. Better than nothing.

KE: So true. That's fair. Looking at the Daily Texan as the resident adult, how different was it that being therein?

NR: One of things that was true both times is there was room for anybody there. That was just a lovely thing about it. You didn't have to be fraternity or sorority material for example.

KE: Was it different in any way?

NR: Well, of course it was. I'm trying to think. It was in the [inaudible 01:29:21] building, back in the day. And, there was a composing room in the basement. But, there were windows in all of the editorial offices. And, that was lovely. It's in a basement now. And that, it makes a different environment being in the basement.

KE: Have you been to it now?

NR: Not recently.

KE: Do you get the Daily Texan shipped to you, ever?

NR: One of the perks of having been editor was I got a lifetime subscription. But then, when I moved to Oregon, I say I moved to Oregon by mistake. Have I told you that before?
KE: No.

NR: I just canceled it. It just seemed like a lot of stuff.

KE: Yeah. Being shipped to Oregon.

NR: Right.

KE: And, you have resubscribed

NR: No. I get it online if I want it.

KE: See their Facebook posts?

VA: That's the beauty if it now. You can get everything online now. You don't have to get a subscription.

NR: Oh! Let's talk something else. I'm in love with the mayor Pete of ...

KE: Me too. We talked about the mayor Pete Buttigieg, he's running for president.

VA: Oh! I think you brought that up in-

NR: Isn't he wonderful?

KE: I love him. I just signed up to volunteer for his campaign last week.

NR: Good for you. I gave him $100. I was one of the people who pushed him over the ... Right. The 65000.

KE: So, he can stay in the debates?

NR: Yes.

KE: I love him.

NR: I just love him more all the time. And, he is so wicked smart.

KE: He is. The Norwegian thing.

NR: Yeah. The Norwegian thing.

KE: Seven languages.

NR: Yeah. And, he did that because he read book and had to read more. His IQ must be off the charts.
KE: 100%.

NR: Yeah.

KE: They have a really cute one eyed dog that ...

NR: He and his husband?

KE: Yeah. It's so cute. I love them.

VA: Oh! The openly gay ...

KE: Yeah. Openly gay mayor.

VA: Oh!

KE: I'm very excited for him. He's getting a lot more traction.

NR: Oh! CNN wrote an article about him and said that he was the hottest candidate.

KE: Yeah.

VA: I got to look this guy up then.

KE: He's great.

NR: You mean you haven't done this yet?

VA: I haven't been really following the election right now and these candidates.

NR: Well, you need to pay attention.

KE: He was in Austin for South by Southwest.

NR: Yes. And, I wanted to see him.

KE: I did too. I mean, that was back, I think, right before all of the big publicity hit too. So, probably would've been able to, which is sad. I hope he does well. How do you feel about all the women running for office now?

NR: It's just bewildering. And, now that I want him, I just want him. And, I supported Beto in that race. And, I've been feeling disloyal now that I'm in love with the mayor. And, I have a friend that I made.

NR: He picked me up one day at work at Barton Springs. He was a Lyft driver. And, he was up and cheerful. And, he said, "Shall we go get you a taco?" And, I said, "Actually that's my next stop. I got to Tacodeli on the way. It's right on the way."
And, the next day he picked me up again, which is very unusual, to get the same driver twice. And, over time, he's become a friend. And, he's been a sweet friend. And, I was telling him about feeling disloyal. And, he said, "That was for another job."

And, that was a lovely comment. It was a different job. And, Beto has been getting a lot of criticism for being shallow, and he's acting shallow.

He is. I'm not impressed with his campaign so far.

And, I was impressed with the other one. And, he was so good on his feet. Like his response to the athletes kneeling question was perfect.

It was.

And, he was like that the whole time. And now, it's like a different candidate.

Yeah. He's trying to be more moderate which is ...

Yes. Tame.

Yeah. Which is not what he was good for in the election. It's interesting now. Pete is getting some of the similar traction that Beto got during the senate race. Like his speech is getting covered, and the same answers getting praised. I like Pete. He's Beto's-

And, I just love it. He came out in his first term as mayor. And, he got the second term with 80% of the vote. And, that's telling us something about the changing times too.

That's true. He's done such a good job as mayor.

An incredible job.

Oh, my goodness. I think it left.

Yeah, yeah. It flew away.

It flew away.

That's the first time I've seen a bird hit a window.

The first time?

Yeah.

Does it happen a lot?
NR: Well, not here, but it happened a lot in my house on Statford. I had a lot of big windows.

KE: Okay. You seemed unfazed by it. It is so quiet here.

VA: I love the cross room Pluckers.

NR: Pluckers?

KE: Yes.

NR: What is that?

KE: It is a wing restaurant. It's on campus and it's open until like 3:00 AM.

NR: Where is it?

VA: It's near UT campus.

NR: Not on the campus though?

VA: No. It's like on 22nd/Rio Grande.

KE: With all the housing and apartments.

NR: What does Pluckers mean?

VA: I guess it's like to pluck a chicken's wing.

KE: It's all chicken wings.

VA: Yeah.

KE: But, I always thought that, I guess, UT was moderately quiet. I never noticed the noise. But, it is so quiet here. It's nice.

VA: Because you've got students walking around all the time.

KE: Yeah, you just hear them.

VA: But here, there's nobody walking around really.

KE: Is it a close walk from here to Barton Springs as well?

NR: I've never done it. This isn't good walking territory because it's hilly.

KE: That's fair. Now you just have to Lyft all those times.
NR: Yeah.

KE: I've only gone to Barton Springs once.

NR: What?

KE: I know. I was working.

VA: You're saying this to the Burton Spring queen.

KE: I know. It's to the queen of Barton Springs. It's a loss for me. I'm sorry.

VA: It's so great in the summer. That's why everybody goes in the summer.

NR: And, it's nice in the winter because there aren't many people there.

KE: Have you gone today?

NR: Yes.

KE: Oh, really?

NR: Yeah. My goal is every day. It doesn't happen necessarily every day. But, that's what I aim for. When I lived on Stratford, when Crispin was at the end of his first grade year, and one night, at supper, I just said idly, "I think it would be nice to go really early." I said, "But, I'd have to have someone to go with me." And, I was just talking to the wind.

NR: Crispin said, "I would do that." And, it was like a parent. He did it with me. It wasn't time when he got up easily. Children vary but how they get up. And, he did it for about 10 days. And then, unceremoniously, he quit. He got me started.

KE: Is he the one that lives here, or?

NR: No.

KE: Okay. Are you overly close?

NR: Yes. We are. Here's another story. One of the reasons I think the story I'm going to tell you happen is that at the time, we were extremely close, even though he was in North Carolina.

NR: October can be so beautiful in Austin. And, it was one of those enormously beautiful days. And, it was so nice that I hung the laundry on the patio. I didn't even have a clothes line. But, I put it on the furniture and the trees.
NR: And, I was just so relaxed and happy. And, when I was putting the sheets in hall closet at the end, they smelled so good. I was just so relaxed, and I think receptive because when I put the sheets in the hall closet, I said something I heard for the first time when I said it, which was, "I need a new a pair of silver earrings."

NR: And, the next day, there was a pair of silver earrings from Crispin in Chapel Hill. That's not a coincidence.

KE: That's so cute. And, he just sent them, just because he thinking of you?

NR: He saw them on a street. It was a street sale. And, he thought of me. Yeah. But, you see what I mean about the closeness. There is something out there, but we don't know what it is.

VA: Very telepathic.

NR: Yeah.

KE: That's cute. And, while he was here though.

NR: Well, in sort of a second chapter of starting me swimming in the morning, he had been in Boston. He used to have a toy store in Boston, in a suburb called the Construction site, construction toys for girls and boys. And, the store was a work of art. And, he'd been there for 23 years. And, he got tired of the cold.

KE: Is it very cold.

NR: And so, I was in Oregon. And, he came out. He puts his goods in storage. He was going to leave. And, he came out and spent three wonderful months with me. He cooked for me. He fired my cleaning woman. He said, "I can do it better than she is."

KE: Did he?

NR: Yeah. And, that's one thing I love about both my boys. They like to work. That's just such a wonderful characteristic. And so, toward the end of that time, he said, "I'm going to go somewhere warm." He said, "And, I'm thinking either San Diego or Austin." He said, "And, if you go to Austin, I will too."

NR: And, it would've been hard to do that. I was already 70 or something. And, it would've been hard to do that by myself.

KE: But, you came.

NR: Yeah.
KE: Does he live close to you?

NR: Not now. He lives near South West Parkway. He owned a condo on Manchaca. And, sold it. He was the home owners' association president. And, he learned a lot doing that. But, it's an awful job. And, there's always somebody on the board who's really annoying. It attracts them.

KE: Oh, yeah.

NR: And so, they're very comfortable where they are. I don't think I would be. It's a big complex with a lot of ... Like a gym and ...

KE: Kind of impersonal?

NR: Yeah. And, to [inaudible 01:43:10].

KE: No large windows outside looking at soccer. Still going.

VA: Oh! It's still at full battery.

NR: Did you all know each other before this class?

KE: No. I didn't even know you went to Westlake. I didn't know. Our class is like 20 people. So, it's very small.

NR: That's nice. Yeah.

KE: I've ironically never had larger than 100 people in a class.

VA: Oh, really?

KE: Yeah.

NR: Where does your class meet?

KE: We meet in [crosstalk 01:44:09] Garrison.

VA: I confuse them.

NR: The old building.

KE: Yes. It's really nice though. I think like classics are a lot in there.

VA: They're in the one across the street at the Wagner Hall.

KE: Wagner, yeah.
VA: I went there every single semester, five days a week, for the past three, four semesters.

NR: Is Wagner east of Garrison?

KE: Yes.

VA: Oh, yes. Towards speedway.

KE: Was there a building aside from the journalism one that you really liked?

NR: What makes you think I liked the journalism building?

KE: I mean, if you had windows.

NR: Yeah. Windows were good. I was teasing.

KE: Okay.

NR: A building that I liked?

KE: On or off campus.

NR: I used to like the patio at the Architecture building. Just go and sit there. That was nice.

KE: They have a really great library.

VA: They have a great ... What's it called? Courtyard in the middle.


VA: Beautiful. The pink flowers that have been blooming there.

KE: Okay. All right. Well, I think that's all.

VA: Yeah. I think that's it.

KE: Did Dr. Green tell you anything else about the project that you expected to be asked?

NR: No, didn’t. But, I sent you her original message to me.

KE: How do you feel about this project? Are you glad it's being done? We'll turn off the recording if you don't want her to hear this.

NR: It's sounds interesting, yeah.
KE: It's interesting looking though journalism of ladies from Journal or New York Times, and everything from the '50s. And, it's just so different than they are, especially at a time that media is so over-sensationalized. The 24 hour news cycle is amazing. I always feel like I can't keep track of everything.

VA: Yeah.

NR: Too much.

KE: There is. How did you pick what articles to write about?

NR: Well, the managing editor was in charge of the news. I was just the general head of the ... and the editorial page. I don't know how to answer that. Just whatever was happening.

NR: They're outside.


NR: Baby talk?

VA: They're doing like the ... Like the high voice, and it's like they're-

NR: Is it grown-ups with high voices?

KE: I mean, if there's a baby or a dog nearby.

VA: Yeah. That's how I sound with dogs.

KE: Yeah. I don't think my dog knows what my normal voice sounds sometimes, because I just baby talk him all the time.

NR: Crispin and Ricardo have two little dogs. The first one they got, this dog was running, covered with mud and feces on a four lane highway. And, they went in and got him. And, a brother of mine, I have four brothers. And, this one brother, who has had dogs, he said, "With no regard for their own safety."

NR: And, one funny thing is now Crispin says, "Dogs." They come.

KE: That's so cute.

NR: Isn't it?

KE: Mine is still a little-

NR: And, no new baby was ever cared for more gently than those dogs.
KE: Do they have kids as well?
NR: No.
KE: Okay. Just the babies of dogs.
NR: Right. The babies of dogs.
KE: Mine is my child.
VA: Yeah. Mine is my child too.
KE: I take mine to work.
NR: Oh! You have a dog also?
KE: I do. She's also a mix.
NR: Remind me where you're working that you're taking a dog.
KE: I work at the Civil Rights project.
NR: All right. And, where is that actually?
KE: Well, we are meeting on campus right now. But, it's off Riverside, in South East Austin. And, we have like a very small old house that was made into an office. And, you have chickens in there.
NR: And, you're allowed to take your dog?
KE: Oh! A couple of my bosses take their dogs too.
NR: So, they have to let you.
KE: Yeah. It's equal. No. When we're working really late, they would rather me staying there and have the dog with me instead of having to go back and take her on walks. And so, I think it's their convenience that I get to take him.
NR: How did you connect with that job?
KE: I have another job as well that's for a civic research institute.
NR: And, when do you go to school?
KE: When I can. I'm also taking 17 hours. Now, I'm kind of dying this semester. I've had both jobs for a year. But, I was doing research for them. And, the civil rights project had published a report that they were like two years behind on their
report. And so I emailed them, just asking if they had any, that they can send me with information more recent.

KE: And, they said, "No. But, if you need a job, we need students to come in and help with this data." And so, I went in and have gotten more responsibility since then, having not wanting to leave. I'm their only intern for their entire office.

KE: Yesterday I was transcribing surveys from people in solitary confinement, which was heart breaking. And then, we're doing all kinds of cool voting rights litigation, legal stuff which is fun.

NR: Raymond, this Lyft driver who's become a friend has been working for organizations with good things like yours. And, what's the rest of that? He's been accepted to the LBJ school in the fall.

KE: Oh, wow!

NR: Yeah.

KE: That's incredible. It's such a good school. I want to take-

NR: This is going to end his driving me around town, I'm afraid.

KE: Well, Lyft will still be here. He can drive you unprofessionally.

NR: But, he's been doing that. Eventually, when we got to be such good friends, he quit letting me pay him.

KE: Well, good for you.

NR: Right.

KE: Do you just text him now? Be like, "I need a ride."

NR: Yeah. And, he can't always do it. But, he often does.

KE: That's so sweet.

VA: Yeah. That's really nice.

NR: It is.

KE: My roommate calls me her Lyft driver, because I just drive her around whenever I can.

VA: That was me freshman year, because I was the only one with a car out of my friend group. So, I would shuttle everybody around. They'd be like, "I need to go
the grocery store." I'd be like, "I need to study. But, okay. We'll go get your crackers."

KE: H-E-B is 24 hours. And so, it's so great. I take it at my friends. We all work multiple jobs. And so, we'll go to the grocery store at 3:00 AM on a Sunday night.

NR: And, you don't look like you live like that.

KE: Oh! Thank you. I feel like I live like that. I was yawning quite a bit. But, it's fun. The 24 hour H-E-B is one of my favorite parts of Austin. The best.

NR: Oh! Raymond usually takes me to the grocery store too, once every two weeks.

KE: Now they deliver groceries to you.

NR: But, you can't pick them out yourself.

KE: No. But then you spend less money if you do it all online. I find that if I go to the grocery store hungry, I spend more.

NR: But, I want to pick up my own bananas.

KE: That one is true. I guess you can leave a note.

VA: Make sure they're green.

NR: I did once use cart, whatever.

KE: Oh! Instacart?

NR: Yeah. And, I was just not happy with the produce they picked out.

KE: It's important.

NR: It is important, yes.

KE: Especially I get a lot of really brown avocados. Yesterday I was really upset.

NR: Oh! So, you're doing this now?

KE: Instacart? No. I just went to the grocery ... I had a few hours off yesterday.

NR: So, you went yourself?

KE: I went myself, yes.
NR: So, you picked out these bad avocados yourself?

KE: They felt firm. They were very bruised inside. I felt cheated.

VA: That’s sad. They have the one where you can pull in, and they just bring it to your car for you.

NR: Say that again.

VA: They have a new thing where you drive in, and just park in certain spot. And then, you text them-

NR: At H-E-B?

VA: And then, you text them saying, “I’m here.” And then, they’ll bring the groceries that bought online to your car. I feel like that might be a more instant way to look at your produce, and be like ...

KE: But, what do you do? Then you still have to go in if you want to change it, which ...

NR: Speaking of groceries, let me offer you a bite of something.

KE: You don't have to.

NR: No, no. I don't feel oppressed. Would like water or ginger ale though?

KE: I'm okay. Thank you.

VA: I'm okay. Thank you.

NR: Okay. I go to Whole Foods.