Warren: This is Mame Warren. Today is the thirteenth of February, 2000. You’re my first interview in 2000. I’m here with Naneen Hunter Neubohn. I’m really pleased to be with you because you’re my first SAIS [School of Advanced International Studies] graduate. So I’d like to start by finding out what drew you to SAIS in the first place. What was your attraction to going to the school for international studies?

Neubohn: Oh, I guess it was twofold. One is, I had studied at my undergraduate preparation, Smith [College], government and international relations, and spent my junior year in Geneva. After working for a year in Boston, decided I wanted to—actually, working in Boston, also having an interest in the State Department, decided I wanted to go back to graduate school. And had heard about the Bologna Program from I don’t know where, it sort of popped up. It was very new at the time, and it wasn’t as if there was a lot of literature out about it.

So I heard about Bologna, and thought I wanted to study in Europe again, and applied, and got into SAIS. I did my first year, which was the practice then to do the—if you went to Bologna, you did the first year in Bologna and the second year in Washington.

Warren: So you did the first year in Bologna?

Neubohn: Yes. Yes. That’s because when you do the final exam, the oral exams and things the second year, and I think they feel you should really be in Washington to prepare for that. At that
time, a lot of the European students didn’t continue. Only a limited number continued in Washington, which was more a financial thing than anything else. They weren’t used to our tuition structure, and so they spent their scholarship dollars, some came to Washington, others just spent one year in Bologna. So I went to Bologna in 1962 and ’63.

Warren: So take me there with you. What was it like when you arrived?

Neubohn: Well, it was not actually not any different from what it’s like today. [Laughter] So you can go and see. It’s amazing that Bologna has simply not changed, partly because it’s an old walled city. The whole wall is not still there, remnants of the wall are there, and the interior the city is very much unchanged. The school had just moved into its new building at that time, the A_____, and that building’s still there and very much needs some modernization, although it’s had a bit since then.

What was it like? I arrived in August of 1962, very hot day. We lived in—well, let me back up. I suspect that—well, there are about 150 students there now. I think there were maybe only a hundred or even less at that time. I don’t think the number was 150. We were half American, half European in number.

At that time we were overwhelmingly male, and actually that is one of the funnier stories. I had gone to a all-girls’ school and all-women’s college, Smith, and we would think when we seen the literature that Bologna was the ratio of men to women was 8 to 1. [Laughter] “This sounds interesting,” I thought. Now, the irony of that is I met my husband in Bologna.

But in any case, we came in August of ’62. The school had contracted some apartment space in Via Degli Orti, which is a little bit outside the ring, some kind of new construction that had gone on that had evidently not found permanent owners, and so the school had rented
apartments. There were maybe ten or twelve apartments with room for four students in each apartment. So a good number of the students had housing in Via Degli Orti.

We had an apartment with four young women: Anna Pellanda from Venice and Traute Scharf from Vienna and Paola Fortucci, who was American, half Italian-American, and myself, Nancen Hunter. The other half of the students found housing with the help of the Center throughout Bologna.

We moved into these rather spartan and bare apartments, but that in itself was sort of an adventure. Three total strangers, two European, two American, male students in other apartments, female students in other apartments, and all of us descending on this poor Italian community, because out there we were really sort of in the suburbs, I think, and learning how to live in Italy, which meant learning how to speak Italian. So the first part of the year was four to six weeks of intense Italian language courses.

Warren: Who would have taught that?

Neubohn: An Italian teacher at the Center. I don't recall her name. I recall the book more. I can see a picture of the book, [unclear]. Bob Evans, who is now the director, who was actually there when we were there, he might remember the name. But there was Italian language instruction for all the students, except the handful of Italian students.

I don't know if at the same time there was English language instruction, because the courses were, in fact, in English. It's an American school in Bologna. But there was English certainly taught during the year. So we had about six weeks of Italian and then the actual academic instruction, I think, started at the end of September.

It was hot as all get-out in August and September in Bologna. Very little air conditioning.
We had lots of little restaurants to be discovered, including one literally down the road where this woman every day made the tortellini by hand, and you could walk by on your way to school and see her making the tortellini, and we would all go and have this feast for thirty cents or something.

So there was a lot of—it was a good getting to know and for a bonding-type period, because there’s the language, but there was also time to get to know the other students. There were events at the Center and there people living in the same building and everybody was in the same boat. They were total strangers. I mean, if there was anybody who was at home, it was possibly one Italian student from Bologna, but the rest of us were all in a new place and a new environment and all kind of prepared to get to know each other, and more likely to get to know our fellow Bologna students, Hopkins students, and the other students in Bologna.

Bologna is a major university center in Italy and the oldest university in Europe, basically. So there are a lot of students there, but the Bolognese contingent from Hopkins really was a little bit of a universe unto itself. We spent quite a bit of time among each other, getting to know each other and organizing events and things.

Warren: Who were your fellow students? What kind of people were attracted there?

Neubohn: At that time they were mixed, I’d say between the Europeans and the Americans. The Europeans were—remember this is ’62, ’63, so this is still quite early after the war, and so the Europeans were ones who had heard a lot about America probably in the post-war period and were curious about an American school, probably not yet ready to go across the ocean necessarily to America, which is a bigger investment and risk, I suppose.

I would say SAIS for the Europeans in many respects has provided, either Bologna or the whole two years at SAIS, provided a broadening of education that becomes quite focused and
narrow early on. A European student chooses often already in high school sort of the curriculum they want to focus on, science or language or whatever, and by the time they've gone through university they've had a very intense and very almost narrow training at the university level, whereas Americans have had a much more, typically the liberal arts training and a broader college education, and they were attracted to Bologna much more by the challenge of studying in a foreign country and studying with other people from foreign countries and having to sort of learn how to live in a foreign environment.

I think the Europeans were probably excited about the broad kind of issues, because we had a course in international relations, we had courses in international economics, contemporary German politics, contemporary French politics, Italian, nineteenth century and twentieth century history, and then various courses on economics, monetary policy, and international capital markets and things like, statistics and some sort of practical things of that nature, but broader. If you'd been studying economics at a European university or even business administration, you hadn't sort of revisited some of the big questions of recent diplomatic history, how do you organize the world, how do you resolve the things that have happened.

Most people that went to Bologna, and I think it's true of SAIS, too, have a bit in their genetic makeup of wanting to have a better world than they entered. So you've got people who just wanted to revisit a lot of these topics that they hadn't had a chance to do in a very specialized university setting, or revisit them with a group of students of a very diverse background, because we were very diverse.

Warren: So how did you approach that desire to make a better world?

Neubohn: How did we approach it? Well, first of all, we discussed whose fault it was, ad
nauseam, as if the world had been [unclear] until then. [Laughter] Which was really the very interesting thing about, I think, Bologna, is that you had students who had learned about the history of the—just take the twentieth century or the nineteenth and twentieth century from various vantage points. It was no longer just kind of the way it was presented at Northeastern University in the United States, or the way it was presented in England, or the way it was presented in France or Germany.

Obviously, at a university level you should get an objective and a broad presentation of these things, but people come with their biases, whether it starts with French/German issues, Jewish/German issues, whatever. So we all discussed ad nauseam how had it happened and how come it didn’t go better and all that, which made these courses come much more alive than they ever were in an American university, particularly from the kind of training I’d had.

I’d been at a New England college, and though I’d spent a year in Geneva, I’d had some broadening, but even in a New England college you just weren’t sitting there in a room with a French student and a German student and an English student and an American student, all discussing the Depression or the Cuban Missile Crisis or the Second World War, whatever, and with different viewpoints and animated and excited about it. You read your work and you did your papers and you handed them in and you kind of finished the course. You never really had to sort of take a stand and discuss things in the same way.

An example, much later, is a young woman who we had when I was in Bologna a couple of years ago, who was the president of the student body, made a presentation to the advisory council, and she said the kinds of things she realized in Bologna was she was standing in the station, the railroad station, in Milan, they were waiting for a train, and she was there with a
Russian and some other European and herself, and the Russian said, "Oh, I’ve just got to make this phone call. Can you just watch my suitcase for a moment?" These were people she knew, not just total strangers.

But she said, and then the train came and she had the choice of sort of waiting to watch this suitcase or missing the train. She said the problem was it wasn’t just that she was making a decision whether to watch somebody’s suitcase and miss the train, but she felt she was representing the United States and what would this person think about people from the United States. So you suddenly had a bigger responsibility in your sort of views and the ways you presented things, because you were a representative of your country at that time in many respects in these discussions. Not that there was a unilateral line, but you felt a burden of, well, this is what they think Americans are. Or this is what they think Germans are.

There was a lot of that kind of experience that was just totally different being in a U.S. university with maybe one or two foreign students at that time.

**Warren:** How did the classes actually work? I’ve seen a number of photographs of SAIS classes and their seminars, and to be quite frank, when I look at it, it looks like a bunch of people sitting around in a circle talking, and I know that there must be—and you were explaining to me that there’s a lot of dynamism in those conversations. Bring them alive for me, help me to make those pictures come alive.

**Neubohn:** Well, the classes weren’t so different from what you see in a U.S. university. Some were slightly more lecture oriented, with twenty or twenty-five people. Some were just pure seminar-type classes. I mean, what was different, for example, we had courses given by a professor—well, there were actually two of them, Alfred Grosser and Jean Baptiste Duroselle.
They both came from Paris and they came on alternate weekends and they taught Friday and Saturday. They were fairly new in their careers at the time. I think Grove Haines, who started Bologna Center, was very courageous in attracting, and good at attracting some of these young to-be-leading European professors to come do some sort of extra teaching at Bologna. So I think it was probably attractive to them, they flew down, financially rewarding, and it was a different kind of system.

In any case, Grosser would come down and he’d give these lectures on France, then he’d take us all, we’d all go out to dinner somewhere. Then he’d insist on dancing, and then we’d be back at eight in the morning and he’d be going still further into whether it was contemporary France or contemporary Germany, which were his two specialties. He was a German by birth and Jewish origin, who left and went to France and spent his whole academic career in France, so he was a great understander of French and German relations.

Warren: What was his name?

Neubohm: Alfred Grosser, G-R-O-S-S-E-R.

So these were just terrific professors. I mean, he’s a known expert in the meantime, he’s now in seventies, probably, but these were just wonderful European professors who brought these subjects alive. As we all know, a course can be very interesting if taught by an interesting person. Almost any subject can be made interesting and some can be made terribly dull, and these were very good professors.

Then there were smaller seminars where you had to read things and make presentations and discussions, and so they were like any other university, except they just often spilled out afterward into the—because the school was small and it was in a little single building. Then you
would just wander downstairs and have a cup of coffee and maybe the students would continue discussing, maybe the professor might even join them. There was a lot of proximity to the professor and in many cases the professor was also kind of in Bologna for unique reasons and so the school was more of his life than it might have been had he been in Düsseldorf or Paris or wherever. People didn’t sort of disappear back into the fabric of a city and only show up at the university. One or two of the Italian professors probably lived locally and had many other commitments, but the professors were also more tied up in the school.

So the classroom picture is fine, but a lot went on beyond the classroom where there was just more ability to sit and talk things over, because the classroom experience of an hour, an hour and a half, a professor has to get a certain number of things accomplished. He’s got some plan behind all that. The luxury of being able to walk over and over a wonderful cup of espresso or something, or a spaghetti or whatever, and just continue the discussion and probe it a little more, was the kind of thing that was available, just really available to the European student in a kind of university and even in the U.S. It wasn’t like that in my experience. The professors had office hours and things and they were available, but this is just unique.

**Warren:** How many faculty members would you be exposed to at the Bologna Center?

**Neubohn:** You know, it’s hard for me to say then versus now. Now I know that even with only 150 students there probably are thirty or forty, if not more, faculty members there. There were about six or seven, possibly eight, were full-time faculty. Then there were a lot of visiting faculty from either elsewhere in Italy or from elsewhere in Europe, who come down and give a lecture and go back somewhere, was there for a day or two. So there’s quite a richness. Even though it’s small, there’s quite a richness of course offerings and people to study with, plus there are some
who are full-time residents who are around. So that you really have the sense that there are people who understand the needs of the school and participate in its decision-making and things like that.

Warren: So you mentioned Albert Grosser and Jean Baptiste—

Neubohn: Duroselle, D-U-R-O-S-E-L-L-E. This is forty years ago. [Laughter]

Warren: Right.

Neubohn: But there are people like that, no doubt, today, in terms of the views of the students. I guess one of them would be a fellow named Pierre Hassner, who comes down from France. He's sort of today’s equivalent of Grosser. Hassner, I think is H-A-S-S-N-E-R, but you can check all these things with Evans.

Warren: So you mentioned two in particular in your time who were quite striking and [unclear].

Neubohn: Oh, there was also a fellow named [Altiero] Spinelli, an Italian who had been a communist and in prison during the war, who was a great believer in Europe. At that time, remember, the Treaty of Rome was signed in ’57, the school was started in ’55, I think. I didn’t have a chance to check that. You’ve told me you have all the facts. But I mean, Europe was really a new adventure, a cross-border organization, but then a school sort of pitching everybody together, too, was quite a new thing and a unique thing. When you had these certain professors who were just excited about the whole European project, Spinelli was certainly one.

Warren: Spinelli?

Neubohn: Spinelli, S-P-I-N-E-L-L-I.

Warren: Tell me about him.

Neubohn: Well, as I say, he was very left-wing in his youth, but I mean, he was in a country that had a fascist history during his lifetime. He had been, I guess, a prisoner of war for a certain
period of time, and he later became a commissioner, I think, of the European Union. He was just an absolutely messianic, convinced that this Europe experiment had to get launched and had to get done, because that was the only way to have peace. I mean, you’re dealing with people who have seen a lot of wars, very unlike the United States, really.

As an aside, my husband and I just gave a large party in which we had at each table sort of historical event of a century. I was just dashing through European history in the few days, the week before this party trying to get the signature events for the fifteenth century, the sixteenth century, etc. These people were kind of fighting with each other for year in and year out. There’d been relatively little in the nineteenth century, but there was just a lot of war.

So Spinelli was somebody who was just totally—his eyes lit up and he was just excited every time he communicated the thought of putting this Europe together in some way that they would stop going to war with each other, and maybe trade with each other, and have student exchanges with other, and cultural exchanges, but not war. Then that rubbed off on you, just the sense of vision and excitement about the whole project, which was the times, really.

Warren: You mentioned spaghetti dinners and the conversations. Was there an organized social life?

Neubohn: Well, there was—no, of course not. One doesn’t organize a social life of young people in their twenties, but there were certain events on the calendar that even though the school was just a handful of years old, there was a tradition of the Americans organizing a Thanksgiving dinner. The Austrians organized a Christmas ball or something. Those are the two that I remember most, but the Germans must have organized something and a few other groups organized events.
So there were a few things like that that were on the calendar, and there was a little student government that helped put some of that together. Actually some of the faculty and faculty wives helped with some of that. So to that extent there were events at the school. There was one trip, school trip at that time which went to Brussels and to Luxembourg and visited some of the institutions of the European Community. So that was sort of a social event.

But for the rest there was the famous Via Degli Orti, with twelve apartments and people sort of giving parties there, and there was a usual amount of giving of parties and things like that. Then people found their own ways, too, they met people in Bologna and they did other things. Some people wanted to be part of that sort of activity and other people were quieter and didn’t want to be. It wasn’t compulsory. You didn’t have to go out every night or something. But there was a good healthy combination of working hard and playing hard, I thought, among the students.

**Warren:** I don’t want to dash away from Bologna, but I also want to get an image of SAIS in Washington, too. So how do you wrap up this exciting year in Bologna and then head back to Washington? What was the transformation like?

**Neubohn:** Well, I mean, it sort of, “What do you do with the boys down on the farm after they’ve seen Paree?” that wonderful song. There was a little of that, and for me it was even slightly more complicated, because in fact I did meet my husband in Bologna and he went to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. So he was in Boston and I was in Washington, and my focus on SAIS in Washington was much more perfunctory. Well, you’ve got to finish this up and get the degree and we were getting married in June of ’64, the same year I was graduating. So it was fairly focused, you know, get the job done and get out.

My second year of SAIS was made very interesting by being asked by the—I forget the
name of it exactly, there was sort of a foreign policy think tank or research center that was headed by Professor Wolfers, Arnold Wolfers. Is that his name? He was a wonderful guy. Somehow or other they asked me to be the notetaker at their discussion. That was probably much more interesting than anything else I did that year. They were discussions about—I think [Richard M.] Nixon was going to China, and then there were discussions about somebody who was a refugee from Haiti. I had to draw up sort of the protocol of the meeting, which meant summarizing it. It wasn’t just a verbatim thing.

**Warren:** Are we in 1964?

**Neubohn:** Yes, ’63, ’64.


**Neubohn:** We had Kennedy and Johnson, so somebody was going to China, or the discussion, should we go to China, right, I guess. You’re right. You’re right. But it was a very interesting—well, it was listening to a discussion among professionals in the area of international relations, and people with special experience and special disciplines, which obviously was clearly a level above listening to discussion in the classroom. So it was for me a great privilege, actually, to sit in and listen to these discussions.

**Warren:** So what kind of people were faculty or visiting scholars in Washington?

**Neubohn:** I don’t remember the Washington faculty as well. It was just a bigger institution. We were in the second year. I remember Robert Tucker, who was a leading authority on American foreign policy. I can’t remember the name, but there was a leading authority on—it’s escaping me—on Soviet strategy. I can’t remember. Also I took a course in Eastern European history.

I confess that where I spent a lot of my effort was with this wonderful teacher, who I think
headed the whole language department, who taught German. My husband's German and I'd never studied German before. I had studied French and I had studied Italian. The summer after Bologna, I decided I would start to learn German. I was going to go visit his family. There was a woman whose name you can definitely get out of the SAIS archives, who taught German and she was Viennese and she was cultured and she was fabulous. I had two other students in the class, which is a luxury in itself. They had zero interest in German. You had to pass a language exam at SAIS, the one foreign language, and that was their foreign language. I'd already passed French. So I just had this fabulous time learning German with virtually one teacher, one-on-one three or four times a week.

So I invested a lot of energy into German and I did the rest of the course to the satisfaction of the department, I guess, and spent a great amount of time traveling to Boston. So I'm not giving you the fair answer on SAIS, because I was already slightly distracted. But that happens in the second year of graduate school, too. I've gone to business school and I've watched a lot of business school students, the second year is very focused on the next year, which means job interviews and completing your courses and moving on. So it's not all that unusual.

Warren: One thing that I realized when I was preparing for this interview is that you were in Washington at a pretty dramatic time. You were there during the Kennedy assassination.

Neubohn: Right. Right. We were in—just backing up, we were in Bologna during the Cuban Missile Crisis, which sort of stopped everybody in their tracks. There was this huge debate over who was right and who was wrong and etc. Then we were there during the Kennedy assassination, that's right.

Warren: Can you conjure that up for me? Was there any gatherings of [unclear]?
Neubohn: Oh, yes.

Warren: Were there teachers who were directly affected?

Neubohn: I’m having a hard time remembering exactly whether—there was so much visual record of those events, that it’s hard to separate what you saw on television from what you actually did. I don’t think I actually marched in the—there was a huge procession. For some reason I don’t think I actually marched in this procession, but I simply really can’t remember, because it was so—we saw so much of this at the time that I literally do not remember whether I marched in it or we all sat and watched it on television. I suspect classes must have been canceled. I can’t imagine.

I do remember just a lot of sitting around and looking at television and just thinking, “This can’t be,” and, of course, seeing the assassination of the assailant on television and things like that. I don’t actually remember for sure whether I was in the parade. I’m sure this happens to other people; you can’t separate anymore what you actually remember and whether you’re fabricating the memory. It happens at a certain age. But it was—yes, I mean, it was a major event of our year at school.

I think we felt more threatened by the Cuban Missile Crisis than the Kennedy assassination, because the Kennedy assassination was, as weird as it was, it was such a sort of domestic thing. It was hard to explain to Europeans how these things seemed to happen in the United States more frequently.

But the Cuban Missile Crisis was right in our home turf of international relations, international affairs, threat of war, taking steps to deal with it, it could risk war, whereas the assassination was, of course, a very serious event, but we had an orderly process to at least install
a new president and there didn’t seem to be as much from our student point of view the threat of an international crisis over the whole thing. I mean, it was obviously a great tragedy, but the Cuban Missile had us really sort of sitting there saying, “Are they going to? Are they not? Are they going to withdraw or are they going to challenge?” And the assassination sort of happened.

Warren: Well, it certainly was a dramatic time to be in Washington.

Neubohn: Were you in Washington at the time? No.

Warren: No, I grew up in Annapolis, so it was certainly close enough, again, [unclear].

Neubohn: I can see these—yes, but I can’t be sure whether I was out there. It’s a strange thing.

Warren: No, I understand. I understand.

The person who was the president of the university at that time also was had interesting international connections, Milton Eisenhower, and I wondered whether you as a student had any awareness of him being president, the former President’s brother, and whether he came to SAIS and whether [unclear].

Neubohn: Actually, I have to disappoint you on this front. SAIS was in Washington and Bologna was in Italy, and I never set foot in Baltimore, obviously not the first year, but the second year. It never really struck me that I was going to Johns Hopkins. In fact, my whole focus was just going over—the fact that it was part of the university was really not part of my experience at all when I was at SAIS. It’s strange.

I didn’t have a car when I was here, so I didn’t drive up there. There was no real need to go up there. It was kind of a medical school. What was I going to go to medical school for? I didn’t know much about the undergraduate university except that I had a friend who went there and played lacrosse. So there was not a sense, for me, much of a focus on Johns Hopkins at all. I
I think it’s too bad.

I think we’ve improved that in the meantime, because particularly in Europe it has an extremely prestigious name, the whole mouthful of School of Advanced International Studies, and it’s just a lot. But when they hear “Johns Hopkins,” they kind of right away identify with a very quality institution.

But for me at the time it was just not part of my experience, oddly enough, and yet Milton Eisenhower was president, but I never saw him or heard him or met him. I mean, Frances Wilcox was the head of the school, as I recall, head of SAIS at the time, and we knew him. But I don’t have any recollection that the university president appeared at SAIS and made any kind of presentation. SAIS was still fairly new in the firmament of Johns Hopkins. I’m not quite sure when they picked up SAIS.

Warren: It was about ’54, I think.

Neubohn: Yes, so this is almost six or eight years later, and it seemed much more of an independent unit to me than I think about it now, although it really is in many respects now, too. Just like Peabody is in many ways, although it’s at least in Baltimore. And the university, to its credit, is very decentralized. I mean, Bologna, for example, had real close calls with financially not being viable, and it wasn’t as if the university was there or SAIS just to write checks. I mean, you, as a unit, had to really finance yourself and keep going, which has actually been important, because it means there’s just a lot of power, empowerment, at the local level and a lot of ability to do things. But when you start up a new American school in Europe, as Bologna was, and then you have the seventies, where there were a lot of radical behavior in Italy, fortunately, I was not there then, it was quite difficult for the Bologna Center, it had some very difficult times. People
picked on the American school as the target, and it had suffered with its admissions and applications and everything for about ten years.

**Warren:** You mentioned someone a while ago that I wondered whether you actually had met and knew Grove Haines. Did you know him?

**Neubohn:** Grove Haines was the founder and was the head of the Center when I was there. I was a student. It was not as if I was his best friend or something. You’re duly respectful and he was the head of the school.

**Warren:** What was your sense of him then?

**Neubohn:** My sense of him at that time is different probably from my sense now. To best honest, I think he was not in very good health at the time I was there. So he was a little bit withdrawn and he seemed just a little bit distant from students and he wasn’t actively teaching.

Since then, with my involvement in Bologna, I’ve come much more to appreciate the challenges he had in getting the school started and what he did and how he furthered certain professors like [Robert H.] Mundell and people like that, who just won the Nobel Prize, that I feel like I know him almost better, at least what his accomplishments were, whereas at the time he was a little bit remote and I think he had a little trouble managing. He wasn’t as healthy as he probably was when he first started the school, so he didn’t have the energy probably that was still required, but he was the person who had the vision and he deserves a lot of credit for that.

**Warren:** Yes, he’s certainly somebody who impressed me.

**Neubohn:** Right, right.

**Warren:** How he went deciding that Bologna would be the place. That’s all very interesting.

**Neubohn:** Right, and it’s been important to be in Bologna because it’s—I mean, it might not be
your obvious choice, but it’s large enough and small enough that it provides what you’d like for a city, but it’s not just so big that it’s unmanageable. It doesn’t attract that many foreigners. If you go to a place like Florence, it’s just packed with students and foreigners and you just don’t even feel like it’s Italy, whereas Bologna is truly local and Italian. It’s a very strong industrial area, actually. There’s a lot of entrepreneurship there. It has its own very good university and it very much appreciates having this school that has a window on the outside world to it and brings in very renowned speakers and has interesting programs. Bologna has a lot of support from the local business and academic community, just because it’s got a school that otherwise isn’t available in the university system there and a perspective on the world that’s enriching to a very rich city, actually.

Warren: You’ve mentioned a couple of times the University of Bologna. What is the relationship? I’ve seen a wonderful photograph of, I think, the fortieth anniversary of SAIS that took place at the University of Bologna. How much of an interconnection is this?

Neubohn: There’s a very cordial and proper relationship. There’s not an interconnectedness in the sense that we’re a part of them or that, but we have a joint project together in a building across the street from our school, which is the Center for Constitutional Studies, and we have students that do some courses back and forth, but generally they’re just two institutions that have respect for each other as academic institutions would. The director of the University of Bologna does things to help us and we provide things to them, but these aren’t merged entities by any sense. He’s got such a huge university to deal with it and so many other issues. I mean, he’s got the medical school. He’s got something like Hopkins has altogether, just a huge school and a huge issue of where do the students get housing and where does he get professors and funds from the
government and so forth. So I mean, it's a perfectly healthy normal relationship, but it's not a love-in or something. It's not that there's just open door back and forth. These are two separate institutions.

**Warren:** Are they in close proximity?

**Neubohn:** Oh, yes. Yes, we're right in the middle of the area where the university is, a little bit on the fringe, a little bit to the farther out part, by they're all around us, are university buildings. The building across the street from us has just been renovated by the university and that's where we have some space to have this center and we also have some access to some classrooms there.

**Warren:** Today are students still off in apartments or is there—

**Neubohn:** Oh, the Via Degli Orti thing is long since gone. Whoever developed that building finally was able to find buyers for those apartments. So students have their housing all throughout Bologna. I mean, the school has some ability to help by having lists of where people were before and so forth, but generally they go find their housing just like all the other students who come to Bologna.

**Warren:** I'm interested and delighted that you keep using the word "we." I see you're on the advisory council for SAIS, is that right?

**Neubohn:** I'm the chairman of the advisory council of Bologna.

**Warren:** Of Bologna. Tell me what that means in your life.

**Neubohn:** Well, the advisory council, just to explain what it is, is a group of thirty to thirty-five people who we hope represent various countries in Europe. Some are alumni and some are not. The idea is to get support from them financially, public relations, introductions, presence in various cities, and we have meetings there getting us into the proper places to meet and then in
the press and making the school better known.

So it’s not a decision-making body the way the trustees is, because there’s no governance. The decisions for SAIS, for Bologna, are within the decision-making of SAIS and the university, but it’s a group of people who are helping us with our mission to deliver high-quality education to these international students and get scholarship funding and things to help some of the students who couldn’t otherwise come. It involves a meeting once a year for the council itself, and for myself I try and get down to Bologna one or two other times and talk to students and faculty and administration to see how things are going.

It’s involved a reasonable amount of fundraising, because fundraising is the heart and lifeblood of anybody who is in the administration of the university, which I’m not, but I help Bob, who is—Evans. Specifically, we’ve raised funds for a chair in German studies, who is a permanent chair in Bologna. We now want to turn to some kind of special initiative for the fiftieth anniversary of the Center, whether it has to do with the Grove Haines Chair or a building fund or something. But we want to turn our attention to that.

So it’s a lot of just counseling and talking with Bob Evans about things, whether it’s to hire this professor or that professor, which is much more his area, but we just talk about it because he needs a sounding board sometimes. Or whether to hire somebody in the administration, or whether to ask the advisory council to lend support and to sway the other. It’s a lot of just counseling of him, and then trying to give some leadership to this group on the advisory council so they’ll give us more of their time and energy and money and whatever we seek from them. All the things you’d expect of a body like this.

Warren: I need to turn the tape over.
Warren: Of course, the other thing I would like to hear something about is what it’s like to be on the board of trustees of the whole university. How long have you been a trustee?

Neubohn: I’ve been a trustee for, I think, six years now. I find it—well, like you said when you read the Gilman speech and then you see what the university’s doing, I find it just amazing to find out what this university is really doing. I think that that’s very helpful to be able to represent Bologna here but also represent Hopkins back in Bologna. But when you look across the array of activities that are going on in this university and the professionalism with which things are being accomplished, it’s extremely impressive, I must say.

Just this afternoon we had this education committee meeting in which there were presentations from the School of Education. It’s got a new name. Plus the Center of Talented Youth, plus the Center which is doing sort of advisory work for schools to develop programs that will make them sort of—well, increase the attendance at schools and the learning of the students. They had the head of one of these schools in southwestern Baltimore, Dr. Gordon, who’s wonderful.

But when you just look at just that’s one day and another day you have a discussion about the library or you have a discussion about what we’re doing in clinical medicine or the School of Public Health, you name it, there’s just extremely high-quality things going on in every nook and cranny of this school. It’s continually amazing to find out how successful the university is on all fronts and the kinds of things it’s trying to do. I know people will come in any day and say we want to do better here and we want to do better there, but they’re doing extremely well even now. It’s a joy actually to see it in progress.
Warren: What exactly is the role of a trustee? What do you bring to the table?

Neubohn: I think each trustee brings different things to the table, and that's why they have a large group and a diversified background. In my case, I think what I'm primarily being asked to bring to the table is to represent Bologna and the international initiatives of the university, which are now involving an office in Berlin, a sort of listening post to see what one might really want to do if one did something more in Europe and whether to do it there or not and whether to set up closer relationships with German universities or extended education or whatever. I mean, the fact that I live in Europe, I think is something that was one of the attractions to put me on the board.

You also can bring your normal judgment that you have from business. My business was investment banking, so I have a certain understanding of finance and how organizations should be run and how to investigate whether organizations are run right or doing well, which is what we call due diligence. But I think, frankly, that a board such as Johns Hopkins has to have people on a more continuous basis in a smaller group really making the decisions, and that goes on primarily at the executive committee of the board, which meets much too frequently for somebody living in Europe.

I don't feel that I'm in a position of steering the organization day in and day out the way certain people who are closer here in Baltimore are, but their decisions get put before the trustees and the trustees can ask questions and if they have concerns they make it known.

There was one decision, actually this one hadn't come up to the board yet, but it was at the education committee where there was some real discussion about changing the amount of time it took to graduate or something. All of a sudden, a group, including the young trustees who are very vocal, but several others said, "Have you considered this?" In fact, the whole proposal
suddenly went away. It sounded like it was about to be put forth.

So there are times when you kind of raise your hand as a group, as individuals and as a group, and say, "Does this make sense? Should we reconsider this?" That proper vetting of decisions may lead to better decisions in the end.

**Warren:** You mentioned the young trustees. How involved are they?

**Neubohn:** I'm not sure I can answer that totally, but they are incredibly talented young people and not one of them is bashful about suggesting something. They have recent experience. They do know the university from the undergraduate level. If there's one part that everybody's trying to make a little more exciting in the university, it is the undergraduate school, I think, to increase the applications and acceptances and so forth. So they're listened to, and I don't know how many hours of the week they put in, but they're an important constituency because they have been there very recently. They're clearly very talented. They're all going to do something interesting and worthwhile, and they get a lot of respect.

Of course, a lot of people on the board of trustees just like to talk to and interrelate with the students, because they are an exciting group and they've got ideas, and particularly the young trustees who are so talented that you just like to sort of single them out and talk to them. I mean, nobody wants anymore to hear about what older investment bakers do, but they might like to hear about enthusiastic young trustees who are starting off on a career somewhere and maybe be of help to them or just have a better appreciation for what the student experience is. So I think they're very valuable.

**Warren:** Yes, I think it's an exciting idea. So now that you've spent some time on the board and you've come [unclear] the place as more than SAIS, one of the questions I've been having fun
asking people, do you think Johns Hopkins, as a place, has a personality, and if so, how would you describe it?

Neubohn: I’m not sure that I think it has a personality, I mean in that sense. There’s this dilemma of image, and I’m not sure that I—I’m only living with hearsay, that the undergraduate school doesn’t have enough personality, if that’s the right word. I had tried to get at least one of my children to apply here, actually to come here, and I know from the sort of street wisdom that, “Oh, Mom, I don’t want to do that.” But I don’t think that’s actually the personality of the undergraduate school. I think there’s probably, people are having a better time and it’s got more warmth and genuine sort of the old college spirit than the image from the outside is. It’s hard to say that, because I’m just dealing with what I hear.

Then the thing that you see so much of at the board is the—well, the whole medical school, the clinical practice, the issues there, which were fascinating, and even APL [Applied Physics Laboratory], which were huge parts of the budget and extremely powerful organizations, but they don’t have personalities that fit necessarily with the undergraduate university and neither does—I mean, Peabody—the nice thing about it is there are these different centers with different so-called personalities. But putting it all together, I think it’s very professionally run, and from what you can see as a trustee, there’s a lot of respect for the different pieces. I mean, how much the head of the SAIS knows about the APL, or the Peabody and engineering school, but there’s a lot of mutual respect, I think, for excellence that’s being accomplished in each of those areas.

So I think of it as maybe it’s an excellent institution, but I don’t think of it in terms of a personality, because I don’t know the institutions at that level. I haven’t, except for SAIS, I haven’t really been in them, and if there were a personality I think I’d have—I think “culture”
would be the word rather than “personality.” I mean, when we talk about my bank, we can talk about the culture. I can’t really talk completely about the culture of Johns Hopkins, because there are a lot of different parts. I see a lot of the top administration, not that many of the pieces, but there is a tradition of excellence.

I guess in a way I’d say there’s more entrepreneurship than I would have expected in a university. I’m amazed at how people sort of go out and get their—I said they had to be funded on their own, they get their projects, they get their research dollars, they do these things, they’re proud of them. There’s sort of a humorous rivalry about did the School of Public Health get more prizes than something or other. But there’s an entrepreneurship and a sort of real pride in what they’re doing. I see people actually having some fun at what they’re doing. But I can’t say that there’s a personality across the board. I haven’t gotten that feeling yet in that sense. Maybe “personality” is the wrong word, I don’t know.

Warren: Well, it’s a complicated place. That’s comes through loud and clear to me.

What haven’t we talked about? This has been a marvelous interview from my perspective, but is there anything we haven’t talked about that you think we should?

Neubohn: The usual due diligence question? [Laughter]

Warren: Tell me what you mean by that.

Neubohn: When you’re about to bring the securities of a company to the public market or sell them, you need to make sure that you’ve explored and you’re representing the investment facts about the security, this company and the security properly. You ask a lot of questions like, why were your earnings down or why were your sales up or whatever, but always ask at the end, in case they’ve been hiding something, which, of course, if there’s a case of fraud they are, you
always ask the question, what should I have asked that I didn’t ask? If they say, “Nothing,” well, then you’ve at least cleared the slate from a legal point of view that you’ve asked and they did not tell you.

What should you have asked? Well, I think from the point of view of SAIS, one needs to ask whether the—and I’m not sure we all know the answer to this—but whether the mission of the School of Advanced International Studies is changing sufficiently for the environment that it’s in. International studies schools were set up at a time when the hope was that we would keep Americans involved in international activity and we’d have educated, trained Americans to serve in the international organizations and in the diplomatic service and so forth.

Nowadays many more of the students are going into the private sector. The diplomatic corps doesn’t—I don’t think the foreign service has that many openings and they’re not as attractive openings, probably, so we have to train our students for much greater variety of careers. At the same time, the business schools have realized that they’ve got to train students that can operate in the international environment, and they’ve probably also realized at the School of Management that those people could also go into the World Bank, as well as a SAIS student could go into the World Bank or to the international organizations, if you will.

So there’s somewhat of a convergence between the business schools and the international relations schools in terms of the students they’re looking for and the markets those students or careers those students are going into. There’s an argument that someone makes that in the end it’s easier to get a job in the various business schools than from SAIS. That’s an issue for SAIS, how much it teaches that overlaps business school and how much it doesn’t. It doesn’t want to become a business school and probably shouldn’t become a business school. But on the other hand, there
are students that we’d like to have at SAIS, they say, “Well, I’m going to get a job much more effectively if I get a business school training.”

Our argument would be, that may be true, but a lot of the people who have a SAIS education in our sense are the ones who become the better leaders in the long run. They’ve got a wider sense of vision.

I’ve been to both business school and to SAIS, and it’s true, the business school probably got me the job, but SAIS probably, at one point, was more instrumental in me getting further in my career because I came to Europe and was much more, much more able than my standard business school colleagues able to operate in the European environment because I had lived abroad, I had learned languages, I had tried to be on the same side of the table as the Europeans, as opposed to sort of thinking isn’t it amusing that they do things differently here, and having a good laugh and going back home, which was very much the sort of American business school-trained person in the last few years.

In the meantime, the business schools had many Europeans, so that we probably passed that point where you needed to have an American who was very good in Europe. We hire Europeans that have either been to European or U.S. business schools, either at Morgan Stanley or at other institutions. I think it’s been very helpful.

I think that the interest in policy, the interest in the public/private interface, the possible ability to cope in other languages, those, I think, probably stand the SAIS graduate in better stead for a long-term career in an international environment than a business school training, but it’s extremely hard to communicate that and attract those graduates early on.

So there’s an issue of what is the ongoing mission of SAIS and does it need to be slightly
tilted and how much should we get some more functional training, rather than regional training and so forth. I think that is an area that might need to be thought about a little, a question you could have asked, whether there should be a business school at the university, should it be part of SAIS, should it be complementary, etc.

Warren: How do you see the long-term future of SAIS? We haven’t talked about the Nanjing Center and how that is another balancing act on the other side of the world. Do you see it expanding even more, perhaps opening other centers?

Neubohn: My guess is I don’t see other centers, but I do see SAIS—well, I see the university probably becoming—struggling with the issue of how to become more international, but I think that we in the United States have the ability to export our skills and education in universities abroad, where the university sector has still been largely state funded, and, frankly, hasn’t kept up with the kinds of things that are going on in the United States. So whether it will be SAIS or whether it will be Johns Hopkins, for example, the possibility of doing something more concrete in Germany and/or Europe from Germany and/or just Europe and somewhere else, if Berlin appears not to be the right place, I think there will be a lot of that, and whether it takes its form in long-distance learning or lectures, I think it will take new forms.

I’m not sure it will take a bricks and mortar form like Nanjing or Bologna. Maybe expanded from there. It could in Singapore. It could, but I don’t see the drive from SAIS coming so much to put in a new location. It’s probably to figure out ways to kind of leverage off what we have, the new learning techniques or student exchanges. I’d love to see the School of Public Health doing more things with SAIS. They’re both very interested in international policy, and it’s a very important sort of coming together of those two in certain areas of their studies.
There are other areas where we could do things at SAIS, maybe some telecommunications or taxation or some things that are international and are policy oriented, that are very commercial, affect the commercial environment where we could maybe become little centers of excellence. It requires—whether it’s appropriate to set up more regional centers. But there could be some day in Africa, if Africa emerged and you felt it was just so important to help Africans learn, I could see something like that. But you wouldn’t put another center into somewhere else in Europe. You would have one in Europe and I think we have one in Asia.

All of that, of course, is a question of where you get money to do things like that. I think you have enough demands for your money, but I think we’d much rather spend our money getting East European student scholarships to the school than setting up a school in East Europe, probably.

Warren: Have you had any connection at all with Nanjing?

Neubohn: No. No, not really. Not really.

Warren: Is there a counterpoint to you from the Nanjing Center?

Neubohn: I think there is an advisory council in Nanjing of some kind. But Nanjing is in a different—to the extent I know for sure, is a different format and it’s sort of a joint venture. I mean, it’s got a host university, I think, as well as our university, whereas we are just ourselves in Bologna, if you will. I think there’s sort of joint venture between the Chinese university in Nanjing and the school. No, I’ve not been there.

The trustees took a trip to Nanjing, I think slightly before I became a trustee, and if they did do that, I would definitely go. I just sort of half retired from my bank, so if I had more time at some point I might go out there, but I really haven’t had the need to go out there, so I haven’t.
It’s not necessary for what I do. But I would certainly like to, because it’s an extraordinary experiment, Nanjing. I mean, there is nothing like it, really.

Warren: Yes, it sure seems that way.

Neubohn: Yes, right. It’s got to be a wonderful learning opportunity for both—of course, it was pre—well, I can’t say pre—for a long time it would be pre in China in terms of liberalization, but it was certainly there well before anything like that, any Western institution was allowed into China to do things sort of on its own term, more or less.

Warren: Yes, it seems to be quite an extraordinary—I was amazing when I found out when it had opened.


Warren: Quite surprised. Well, I just want to thank you. This has been marvelous from my perspective.

Neubohn: Well, I hope it’s been useful.

Warren: Oh, I know, I can already see some of it on the page.

Neubohn: I probably slighted a little bit SAIS just because I’ve spent so much time on Bologna, and as I say my second year at SAIS was a little bit perfunctory. I mean, I kind of knew where I was going afterward and did my courses and did my wonderful work at the Research Institute, but I didn’t immerse myself that much in the whole student body the way I had done in Bologna. So you may need to talk to another person to get the full flavor of Washington SAIS.

Warren: Well, I’ve talked to a faculty member there that gave me a vivid picture. I’m thrilled to have this Bologna, because I’ve got great pictures of Bologna. So you’re going to complement them wonderfully.
Neubohn: Good.

Warren: Thank you so much.

Neubohn: Okay. Thanks.

[End of interview]