Today is August 16, 2016 and this is Jenny Kinniff, program manager with Hopkins Retrospective. And I'm here today in the Keswick recording studio with Lonnie Caming Carton, who's here to talk to us about her life and her experiences at Hopkins. So thank you very much for being with us today.

My pleasure.

Could we start by talking a little bit about your early life and your family? Could you tell me where you were born and a little bit about your family?

I had my beginnings at Memorial Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. I was conceived in New York City and that is because I never knew my father. My mother left New York and came back to her hometown, which was Baltimore, because of the fact that they did not get along. I'll just put it that way. And I grew up in a family all living at 825 Brooks Lane, which we visited yesterday and which is so different, obviously.

That's right by Druid Hill Park, right? By the lake there?

Yes. Yes. I lived in a home, 825, with my grandfather. I've got to count them: My mother. At one time five aunts and three uncles. We were certainly, if I'm going back a while, reanalyzing, we weren’t certainly at that time, nor even later, in a position as a large family to send me to college. And one really has to think about the times.

Not that many women went to college. In fact, many, many young women—we were called girls then. Young women would leave high school—it would be high school then, maybe junior high now
probably—at the fifth or the sixth grade. That's all any of my aunts ever—and even my uncles did not graduate high school because they went into the family business, which was coppersmithing.

My grandfather was a coppersmith. That's the reason that he was given his name at Ellis Island when he came over from Russia. I think probably when the man asked him, the agent at the desk, “What is your name?” he probably thought he meant “What do you do?” And my grandfather with his Russian accent would say “Coopersmith.”

And so we got the name Cooper from the fact that he was a coppersmith. And the way many people's names were changed, many Jewish people, which I am and of course my family is, got the name Smith. That's hardly, if you look upon names, a "Jewish name." But they were probably some other kind of smith. A silversmith, let's say.

They were either called Silver as their name given at Ellis Island or Smith. And that's an interesting part to me, about language and how it relates to the time and the culture. So I lived with all these many, many family members.

JK: Did they have children or were you the only young person?

LC: I was the only child living in this home of adults. I grew up very quickly. I was really—it sounds funny, but I was really to most of my aunts—without much humility, I guess, the one they came to for advice because I was the scholar. I was the brains because I read more books. That was my life really. I think Emily Dickinson said “There is no frigate like a book to take you,” I don't remember, “oceans away” or whatever the ending is.

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I'm paraphrasing her. And that was my world—books. I read everything. And so I did have a maturity more than a lot of young people who had other activities. I did two things. I read books and I played step ball on the beautiful white marble steps of Baltimore.

JK: How do you play step ball?

LC: How do you play step ball?

JK: Yeah. Just bouncing a ball, or is there actually a game?
LC: It's a game. Well, it was a game. I don't think I've seen people recently—the ball's about this big [makes a softball-sized shape with her hands], a rubber ball. You throw it against a step—four or five steps. And if you catch it before it bounces, you get a point. When you think of video games and the kinds of games children play today, you can see how wide the difference is.

That was a big time game. We could play for hours. And the books of course were the Enoch Pratt Library, which is still in existence, and which really was, I would sort of say, an adoptive mother to me. The only thing I did not like about the Enoch Pratt Library was that they only allowed you to take out two books at a time and I was not close enough in walking distance to be able to get enough books—I needed more in those two weeks that they allowed you to take out the two books.

So that was the only thing I did not like. But I borrowed between girlfriends and so forth. I grew up in this household. I went to Western High School, first to [Robert E. Lee School Number 49] which was an accelerated junior high—well, it wasn't called a junior high in those days. It wasn't called a middle school either. I'm not sure what the technical name was.

It would be a junior high today. Which skipped me a year. In other words, that was a three-year program, junior high, that all the people who went there accomplished in two years and then it went on to the equivalent grade in high school. I particularly chose Western High School because certainly in those days Western was the elite girl school. It was all female—

JK: It still is.

LC: The girls who were less interested—well, no, I better say it in a nicer way—who were more interested in a rounded education, including men—see, now I'm back in the business—went to Forest Park or Eastern or some other school. I went to Western for two reasons. One, because it had a fine academic education. It was a public school.

It wasn't a private school. [Two,] because I could walk to it with a long walk. And actually every penny counted in those days in my large family. And so if you could walk someplace, that was what you did. You weren't any martyr. That's just what you did. That's what people did. You had streetcars, you had buses and if a family had a car that was unusual, and it was the family car.
Think today, you can go to one of your high schools today and you will see cars parked all day long because many, many students have their own cars.

JK: That's true.

LC: That wasn't the world. It was a different, different world. At any rate, it wasn't at Western that my genesis of eventually going to Hopkins began. My Aunt Blanche, who was the only member of that large family—I won't go through names. It doesn't matter. But most of my aunts were single and remaining single.

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Only one of my uncles marrying, and he was the youngest. And so he I think got a little of the more modern way of doing things. I'll put it that way. As cultures changed. And so he did graduate. I don't think it was from high school, but it was a business school, something after junior high.

JK: A vocational school?

LC: A business—it was a long time ago and so I'm doing my best.

JK: You're doing great.

LC: But my Aunt Blanche, who was the only one who graduated from high school, she was my academic mother. She read. She was a reader. My other aunts weren't particularly. And I think, but I don't know, even though my major later on was Psychology I still don't understand absolutely. I think it was because I was this old-before-her-time person who lived in the family who everybody—except one uncle who teased me tortuously, but that's another story.

He didn't have much to do with Hopkins or me at that time. I think that everybody in my family, because of my life was really part of my going to Hopkins. It sounds like it may be way off, but it's part of who I was, who I got to be and why. My Aunt Blanche, who was my academic mother, as I say, and most of my aunts, I felt as I look back from a position once I got my own degree—not from Hopkins, but from the two other schools which I attended afterwards: University of Maryland and Penn State.

They were able, for which I am grateful, to live through me just as many parents unfortunately live through their children. She was dedicated to the fact that I would not waste my potential—what
she thought was my potential—but she wasn't sure. So she went to my guidance counselor, whose name I do not remember, and she said to her, maybe in my junior year or maybe it was later. “Does Lonnie—could she make it in college? Should she go to college?”

Again, at a time when not that many women were going anyway and at a time when I had a rather unique family. And money was always a question. My guidance counselor said “Oh, absolutely. She's done well here,” etcetera, etcetera. Just as a joke: the only male I ever saw in Western was the custodian.

JK: Really? Even all the teachers were female, too?

LC: Absolutely. It was a different time. Well, maybe not, because when women were able to graduate, what choice did they have in terms of professions? They could either be teachers, nurses, secretaries, maybe some other—stenographers, but pretty basic. Not too many of them were scientists or medical doctors or whatever else.

With that encouragement from my guidance counselor, my aunt said “The problem is, what do these colleges cost?” And you again have to remember that my family, wonderful as it was, was not part of a knowledge world that knew what most people would know today, such as what does a college cost? Where could you go?

No experience at all, not either personally or with friends. And I think this is the story, because I'm not sure. In fact, you said to me you have some record of me that I don't even know existed. But I think it went this way: that my guidance counselor said to my aunt at that time Johns Hopkins is experimenting—if that's the right word. I don't know. Piloting might be better—a program in which they are trying to test what the entrance of women would be to their all-male school. And I think—again, I'd love to know really. But this is the story I know or heard. My guidance counselor said to my aunt, I think they are taking about ten or so women as a trial—and the reason I, meaning she, the guidance counselor knows about this is that the guidance counselors in certain high schools were asked, whom would you recommend?

After all, they don't want somebody to come who would not put her heart and soul or have the potential, whatever it is. They wanted to be fair to the women, who represented women. My
guidance counselor said I would be glad to recommend Lonnie. Would you like me to continue or shall I let you ask a question?

JK: You are covering all my questions as you talk, so this is great. I will interrupt you if there's something I want to go back to.

LC: I have a blank spot in my mind, and I've tried very hard and I have generally a very good memory about most things in the past. I cannot remember anything—anybody in my family talking about this. It may have been my Aunt Blanche kept it all to herself. She only went to the family when she said look, this is the amount of money that we need to send her to college.

We all have to share. Everything was shared because nobody, one person had the money. It is a blank to me whether there was any discussion in my family about my going, about my not going. I don't remember anything. My family was not the family that probably would have discussed this. If Blanche was going to handle it, good.

My next recollection, I never remember coming to Hopkins except—when I say coming, I mean when I was here I was here. I knew every moment of it, but until I walked over, the way I got to Hopkins was I lived off of Lake Drive so I walked across the 28th Street Bridge. And that was the way. It was a long walk, but my legs were better then and it didn't seem like a long walk.

There was no other way to go. Well, I could have gone, I guess some way, but that would have been more fare, etcetera. And I walked over the 29th Street Bridge to get to Hopkins. I do remember someone at Hopkins, and maybe the administrator, I don't know, I can't remember that part, saying that there was one thing we all had to know, the women, the ten women. There were ten.

That this was a pilot. They would guarantee that we could stay if we made the grades. That we could register for anything, any department, but—and here's something, young people today just shake their heads.

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We had to request of the professor of the course for which we registered that we be allowed in his class. Now there were only ten of us. It was spread out in different departments. I was never in a class with another female. The one woman I remember very well.
still to this day is Joyce Jacobson. Joyce Jacobson Kaufman, whom I spoke to not long ago, maybe within the year.

She is not doing so well, memory wise. But I talked to her daughter and she had learned all this when Joyce was younger and a little more lucid. She told me—and Joyce was in Chemistry and she was brilliant. And I'll tell you how brilliant she was. And she also said certain professors said to her, “I don't think so.”

JK: So they didn't always accept you into their class.

LC: I beg your pardon?

JK: They did not always accept you into the classes?

LC: That's correct. Very politely. To me, I can only speak what they said to me. The Biology professor said with a smile, “Well, you know,” he said, “my entire Biology content would have to change because I tell the kinds of jokes and say the kinds of things in my Biology class that I really would not want to say if a woman is in the class.” Again, you've got to remember the culture, the time—and that was it.

So I took that class on Saturday morning. I remember that because I couldn't find a Biology class or time, whatever it was, where I would be accepted, or thought I would. I'm not sure I tried every Biology professor. Again, the departments were smaller. It wasn't like it is here. You've got a big choice now.

JK: Before we start talking about your time at Hopkins, I just wanted to ask you. Did you think—

LC: Would you speak just a little louder? Because I'm not supposed to move forward to you. I got instructions from my media consultant there and so I have to hear you.

JK: Okay, yes. And you can always ask me to repeat things if you want. Did you think about or even look into going to any other colleges in Baltimore, like Goucher?

LC: I never thought about going to college. Remember, I had no role models. I just grew up like Topsy. You just went to school. I didn't know what would be after high school. I didn't think of college. That's all I can say that I recall.

JK: So your aunt was really the one who brought it to you.
LC: Yes, right. Right. I may have and I don't remember. But I don't remember thinking about college. It was sort of like we weren't great planners, and if you're going to think about college you have to plan. And I just knew I was supposed to get the best grades I could and I always wanted to at Western. Actually I had the potential I guess, or so my guidance counselor said.

But no, I don't remember thinking about college until my Aunt Blanche brought it up. And I think the reason is I was almost obsessively grateful to this family, which took in my mother and me, penniless, and I always felt still today that not hurting family comes first. It comes first [before] maybe what some of your goals are, whatever.

So I don't recall that I would have talked about “Gee, I'd like to go,” because I knew that would be a financial burden. Or what plan did they have for me? Maybe the plan was to work in a five and ten. I don't know. We were not self directive at that time or advanced planners in my family, certainly.

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So the answer is probably no, I did not think ahead of going to college. Until my aunt brought it up. She was an advanced planner because she knew the consequences of everything. I didn't yet.

JK: And one other question. The administrator that you spoke to at Hopkins, was it a woman? Do you remember?

LC: I think it was a woman.

JK: There were two women at Hopkins that you might have been talking to at that time.

LC: Well, there was one in Child Study, and her name I even know. She was well known. Was Bamburger.

JK: Yes. She was the head of the College for Teachers. The McCoy College.

LC: And that would have been what I would have gravitated to given—well, I did have some advanced plans, not quite that early given to the fact that when I was fifteen and three-quarters—remember, very mature—I met my husband, who went to Johns Hopkins. And we did do advanced planning.
I became educated to advanced planning and earning your own living and so forth. The plan was—he was a Chemistry major—the plan was that he would graduate and go on to graduate school. See, that was it. And I would work as a teacher. That's the plan. The war interrupted that and he went into the service, which enabled me to come to Hopkins one year before he went into the service, which enabled me for the time he was in the service to graduate in three years and a summer, or maybe two summers. I don't remember that. But not in four years. In less than four years. So we then went off—we got married and we went off to our advanced planning.

JK: And how did you meet your husband?

LC: Again, we should really give this to women today, young women today, because they would really get an idea of how things have changed. I'm not saying everything needs changing. But how different it was. How when a professor said—I will tell you in a minute. I'll answer. How when a professor said to you nicely—and it was always nice, courteous—"Johns Hopkins is for earning a BS. Not an Mrs."

Today a woman would answer him back, probably. It wasn't that way. It was also a time when if you had a daughter or a niece or somebody and you wanted them to meet nice young men—today don't ever tell your daughter you want her to meet somebody, because that's the one guy she will not meet. It's just so different now.

I had an aunt—one of my uncles—now I'm answering your question. I had an aunt married to my uncle—Irvin the tease, the torturer, who was a nurse at Sinai Hospital. She had a patient—can't think of his last name. But the patient had his grandson visiting one time. My aunt was the nurse. She was in the room. The man, Mr. X, I'll say. I don't know his last name, the grandfather, said, "So what are you doing this weekend?"

And Dave, who was the grandson, said “I'm going to a fraternity rush dance.” And the grandfather interestingly said “Oh, who are you taking?” Because this guy David was a nerd and I don't think he took too many women out. So the grandfather was excited. And he said “I really don't have a date yet.” This guy, David, the nerdship must have worked well for him, because he became a very famous surgeon later on in life.
But my aunt through marriage quickly popped up and said “I have a lovely niece.” Well, that would have been the death if you said that today. But that's the way things were done. Somebody in your family could match you up and there was not a feeling of mind my own business, I don't need you, whatever. So my aunt quickly gave him my telephone number, no questions asked. I remember I was taking a bath in my grandfather's large bathtub.

Some of the bathtubs in those days, legs and all, and that was the one bathroom that we had on the downstairs floor. The rest of us all slept on the second floor and we also had one bathroom. So it was a little crowded at times. My aunt came in and knocked on the door and said “Somebody named David is calling you.” I wiped off, I got the phone in the next room and he said who he was.

My aunt had never told me. It's strange to me that this guy's calling but sounds interesting to me. Go with a college boy, wow! I'm fifteen and a half. But I was old. I can't tell you how old. I said yes, I'd love to. And then he told me my aunt, so I knew it wasn't a crank call.

He picked me up. We were now at the fraternity house that night, I'm dancing with him. He was a little shorter than I, and over his shoulder I see that bright light just as I'm looking at it now, and it was this young man, tall, handsome, who looked like he was in need. Like when you see somebody who really looks like, help me—

JK: Like they need saving at a party?

LC: Right. I don't know what I'm doing here. Please save me, come over, talk, anything. Our eyes met and again a lot of people don't believe this story knowing me, but I said to myself “That is the man I'm going to marry.” And so it came to pass. So Ed was seventeen when he graduated from Cambridge, Maryland, which is where he came from.

And entered Johns Hopkins right away. So we mixed these years up, and I was seventeen too, give or take. I don't know what the months were. And so when I came here, I was thrilled to come here, because here he was at Levering Hall. Is there still a Levering Hall?
JK: Yes there is.

LC: Levering Hall, all the boys played bridge. They still play bridge, I guess.

JK: I don't know what they play.

LC: Video games, probably. But that was the bridge haven of the world. I then got to meet Joyce Jacobson, the other girl, the brilliant, brilliant girl, because she was going with one of the bridge players. So that was the only way I ever saw anybody who was within the experiment—the women. Because I knew her, because she sat and watched them play bridge with her husband and so forth.

JK: Now can I ask you—you were officially enrolled in McCoy College, the College for Teachers.

LC: Not to my knowledge.

JK: Did you take—how can I ask this? And you knew from the start that you would be a full-time student, not a part-time student.

LC: Absolutely. No question.

JK: And did you take most of your classes during the daytime?

LC: Yes.


LC: The only class I took at night that I recall—remember, we weren't McCoy. I heard about McCoy. We were the experiment. McCoy was an ongoing part-time college I think, wasn't it? I looked it up on the Internet.

[0:35:02]

JK: Yes, part-time and evening college.

LC: Part-time what?

JK: Part-time and evening college, so Saturday classes or night classes.

LC: No, we were different. And I asked Joyce's daughter and she said no, and you can hardly be part-time as a full-time Chemistry
major. You've got to watch your experiments. That's what I know about McCoy College. And so where was I? When my husband joined the Army, as did large numbers obviously during the Second World War, he was seventeen and a half, eighteen.

He had just finished one year at Hopkins. I was told a year ago by Joyce's daughter that it was her understanding that the reason Hopkins began this pilot program—it's different, not McCoy, not anything—was because they were concerned how long the war would last and whether or not they would get enough people to come.

If most of the males were going to war, or heaven forbid, dying in the war, would they be able to keep up their admittance? That's what a year ago Joyce's—I don't know whether that's true or not. At any rate, there were three teachers Joyce and I both agreed were kind to us. We came in, they accepted it: “Fine, sit anywhere.” One was Sidney Painter [looks over at family in the recording studio]—some of these people over here I told it to, so I remember.

Dr. Fagan who was an Old English specialist—Chaucer specialist, and Dr. Albright, a very famous archeologist. And of course Bamberger. I think I took a course from Bamberger. At least I was in her—I think—or maybe I knew her later in that field. I'm not sure. So those four people we agreed were okay, come in, whoever you are, if you're a student to do the work, that's it.

After the first year that we were there, we got a notice or phone call—again, I don't—because it would have gone through my aunt, you see, not through me. I was not the person who registered. I mean I may have registered, but she was handling everything. And it said something like, or she told me that, Hopkins had decided that the pilot was not working as well as they had wanted it to. And that in fairness to us, which I always respected Hopkins for it. I love Hopkins.

Those times were different times. I understand where they came from, believe it or not. In courtesy to us, they wanted to stop the program, but they would not do it if they had no other place to go. I didn't, because we only paid by the course credit. Obviously we didn't, as far as I can remember, obviously we didn't use any of the facilities here. Couldn't use the swimming pool. We used the library only.

We couldn't join a sports team, let's say, or any of the other advantages. We didn't live in a dorm. We couldn't live here. I don't
know whether it was by the credit, but I know that we paid much less obviously than the average student because we weren't the average student and it was something my family could afford.

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I remember the two colleges they offered, and Joyce agreed with this, were Goucher, an all-girls school, or Towson’s teacher training program. Well, I wanted to stay here. My husband to be was here, it was a wonderful education here, I could walk across the 28th Street Bridge. I was home, and we could afford it. We did not accept the offer.

It was an offer, it wasn't a mandate. I understand from Joyce that some gals did move someplace else. One girl I know got married, became pregnant and she left. There's a woman here, the only other woman, named Tommie Divinni. I don't know what happened to her. So we remained, these two or three girls of the ten, and we did our classes, we did what we had to do, we graduated. Joyce and I were really happy here because we had our mates here.

I don't know how the other—I didn't care what anybody said to me because this was not going to be my forever place. I just came for an education. I came to Western for an education. That's what I looked for. Say other things, okay I could live with it. I remember students were upset, some students, that we were here.

It was as if we were barging in on their school, even though I and Joyce did not know of any time that there were two women in a class.

JK: You never had another women in your classes?

LC: I never had—there was never another one.

JK: How do you know your classmates were upset? Did they say it to you directly?

LC: Wait, how did I know my classmates were—?

JK: Were upset that there were women in school. Your male classmates.

LC: Because some of them would mumble under their breath. “What are you doing here? This is Johns Hopkins. This isn't a school for girls.” There were attitudes that were just different, that's all. Not
large numbers, particularly when I would be seen in Levering Hall, you see. We were sort of protected, Joyce and I, by the fact that we were going with guys there.

Maybe that was part of it—“Oh well. Don't bug her.” I'm not saying every class, and I always came in a little late and sat in the back. I didn't want to disturb anybody. I tried not to answer any questions. What you want to do when you want to hide but still get the education. We prevailed. I think the most marvelous part of this story from my point of view is later, much later, although she—I have a guess really.

I can't tell you how bright Joyce was. She was just fabulous as a scientist. I think in her time if she had not been a woman, and maybe this is my bias—she could have been up for the Nobel Prize. I have all of her awards and so forth through the years which I could send you. But the best part to me is Joyce became, of course in her later years, a full professor at Johns Hopkins University in Chemistry.

I think that's a wonderful ending to this because of the fact that if we look at people today and we judge them on some irrational basis. We never are able to see their potential. But Joyce got the chance to be able to show her potential by coming to this school, by graduating, by working as an instructor here, and then she went to other jobs along the way. I just love the fact that she was able, and her daughter also said that she got a real enjoyment out of that.

[0:45:09]

JK: That is really wonderful.

LC: I don't know what else there is to tell about. I think I've told you what some of the professors said. I'm trying to think of other—there was a gentleman there. Maybe you know him or you could check his name for me. I'd like to know his name. This is horrible. Well, I shouldn't have—he was a geologist. Do you—

JK: I don't know off the top of my head, but I can look at the list of faculty.

LC: Yeah, I'd love to know his name. I made a terrible mistake when I looked in the catalogue and saw what I thought a Geography course was being given, but it was Geology. And science was not my field. Psychology was and is and what they call the social sciences, I guess. I entered his class. I think by that time I was
about a week from graduation and I needed three credits. So okay, I'll take this.

But I could never make it in Geology with stalagmite and stalactite—that didn't get me. I did not do well. I think by really struggling I got about a C average, and for me I got A's and B's here. Worked hard and maybe I took easy courses, I don't know. Whatever it was, I got A's and B's. And when we came for our final, and I did the final with all the other students, I came to him after the final, I'd say about a week from graduation, and he says “You failed.”

And I said, “What?” I had a C going in. If I failed the final, at least give me a D. I'm graduating. I said, “May I see my paper?” No. I taught at Tufts for 14 years. My students could see whatever I marked and they could discuss it because after we're adults. We're not kindergarten children. I said “You know, Professor,” whose name I think I in a good way blocked, George somebody, I think was his name.

But in the years I was here it would have been he was here in '49. And I said “I have never gotten lower than an A or a B.” I was in shock. And he said “Sure, I bet. I know why you women want to come to these male schools.” It was always that. That was the main thing. You were out of your territory. You should be something else. Not this.

Stop infringing on our territory. That was the message you got. Not for all the guys. Some didn't pay attention but you got enough to know. So I said “Would you please call the academic dean to find out what grades I got?” I did. He was just praying that I could have gotten a lower grade, but the dean said I had all A's and B's. Maybe one was a B-minus, but I'm just like—so he looked at me, very little red in the face, and he said “Well, I guess you did. All right, I'll give you a D-plus.” He was doing me a favor. I said “Fine.” I want to graduate. That's all I care about. He said “You have to make me one promise. Don't ever be a teacher.” And I said “Yes, sir.” And we said sir. Well, I've been a teacher all my life.

JK: Why do you think he said that? Because he thought you weren't smart enough to be a teacher?

LC: I don't know. I don't know. Maybe he just had to say something. I don't know.

[0:50:00]
JK: Trying to save face, or something.

LC: Well, maybe. I don't know. I don't know. I would imagine that if I were in his place given the culture and I went to the dean of academics and said I have a such and such in my class, not like the rest, and she failed the exam. She did get a C in the midterm. She's only been here for three years and yet she's gotten all A's and B's and I'm planning to fail her, I think the dean of academics would have given him a hard time.

I think he didn't want a hard time. None of us do. Let it go. No skin off my teeth. I'll let her go. And fortunately he let me go or whatever and I've always thought that—well, maybe that's my bias. He called on me a lot in class, the answers to which I did not know generally. I think he got joy out of that.

But he was the only professor here in my three years and a summer, perhaps, that was ever mean. The others were just look, they were part of the time and part of the way people thought. But not mean.

JK: Why did you decide to graduate in three years? Was it so that you could catch up with your husband?

LC: Exactly. Exactly, yes.

JK: Was it difficult? That's a pretty heavy course load.

LC: I don't remember. When my husband was away in the Army, I didn't see him so I had nothing else to do but walk across the 28th Street Bridge. I didn't have to watch games in Levering. I had a lot of time on my hands and I did not have as I recall—what word am I looking for?

A limit on the number of—at the University of Chicago I think, and even back then, you could take as many courses as you could pass. I was studying in Johns Hopkins but I was never part of Johns Hopkins, following the rules, having rules and regulations, so that I did not have a limit on my courses. So maybe each year I took an extra course. I don't know. But whatever it was they added up to—

JK: To what you needed.

LC: To whatever you needed, in addition to the Geology professor. I can't wait to hear his name, or maybe—
JK: I will definitely let you know.

LC: Okay, fine. And I will send you the material from Joyce because she was another one who I know for sure graduated with me.

JK: And was the third woman you thought, was Tommie Divinni?

LC: I know that was her name. I don't know what she did. Whether she got—I don't know.

JK: I can look her up, too. I can let you know if I can find her. And you said while you were here you never really felt like you were a part of Hopkins?

LC: The only part I was of Hopkins was that I was grateful and proud to be associated, to tell people “I go to Johns Hopkins.” A lot of people didn't know whether it was an all-boys—a lot of people didn't know in those days what's boys, what's girls. My husband-to-be was here. The education was stimulating, but I wasn't a part of Hopkins. Neither was Joyce, in the sense that you had any kind of comradeship.

[0:55:00]

I didn't sleep in the dorms. That's what I mean by not a part of.

JK: I understand. And at that time there were a lot of male students who were also commuters. They lived at home. But I think it was obviously different for them because they could use the gym, they could go to the fraternity house—

LC: Exactly. And probably half the people who they associated with didn't know whether they lived in the dorms or not in the dorms. Because at least today, after the first year a lot of students, I don't know about Hopkins, get apartments. It was different.

JK: And tell me about being there during the war or right after the war. You started in 1946 at Hopkins, is that right?

LC: Yeah, I came to Hopkins in '46 when I graduated from high school. Right.

JK: Where there returning veterans already on campus at that time?
LC: I think there were some. But not the massive number, obviously, yet. I’m trying to think when the war was over. What year was the year over?

JK: '45.

LC: '45.

JK: And I think the GI Bill started in '46.¹ I'd have to look that up, but I would imagine over those next couple of years that you were there, there were more veterans coming.

LC: I would imagine so.

JK: Including your husband.

LC: Maybe her story as to the reason for the pilot program, Joyce's daughter's story is not the right one. It might not always fit into the exact dates. But I don't know that. I’m just telling you what I heard and what she said to make this story as complete as I can.

JK: So let's see. Other questions that I have. After you graduated, what did you do next?

LC: I taught school. My husband got a fellowship. They didn't call it a fellowship then. A research assistant, I guess you would call it, at the University of Maryland in Chemistry—Organic Chemistry. And according to the advanced plan, I taught school in Laurel, Maryland, which is very interesting since half of my class left for Florida because you know that's a horseracing town, or it was, and half of the people who lived in it were associated with the racetracks. In the winter they went south.

JK: Oh, really?

LC: Oh, yes. So I would have half a class after November.

JK: How interesting.

LC: It was a big racing town. I don't know what it is today, but—

JK: They still have a racetrack, but I don't think it's the main thing in town anymore.

¹ The GI Bill was signed into law in 1944, and veterans began signing up and receiving tuition benefits that same year.
LC: It was a big, big racetrack. And I taught there and then I taught there for a year, my husband was in graduate school. And then the next year—would you like to guess what the salary was?

JK: [Laughs] I couldn't begin to guess.

LC: It was $2,000 a year.

JK: Oh my goodness. I wasn't going to guess that.

LC: That was not too much. My $2,000 and his $1,500, $1,000—whatever he got. So I took the exam. In Washington you had to take an examination to get a job as a teacher at that time. I'm lucky I read a lot of books when I was young because they ask the kind of questions that you would have been taught in a history class, who Samuel Gompers was.

Well I knew, thank goodness, who he was. Nothing about teaching or kids that you really had to know. And I was able to get a job in one of the worst schools, probably still—I don't know about still. South Washington Junior High School, and that's where I really learned that I wanted to work in psychology because wow, there's so much to working with people, and particularly young people, that we need to know if that's going to be our job.

Whether it's teaching or whether you're a medical doctor, whatever. Again, my husband was a chemist. It took him two years to get his master's, which is normal for chemistry.

[1:00:01]

If you were with somebody who's at a university in the sciences, at least Chemistry, you rarely see that person because their experiments—they have to be in the office—the lab, I'm sorry—at two in the morning to turn off a Bunsen burner or whatever it is, they're there. If they have to stay till two in the morning, they're there.

We lived a kind of rushed life and I decided in the summer I would go back to school. So I began my master's degree at the University of Maryland. I don't know how—I'm not sure how I accrued the credits, but I must have taken more courses than I should have. I just don't know that, but we both graduated in the same year. We both made it in two years. I still taught in the winter.
In the summer I went to the University of Maryland. And then my husband got a real fellowship at Penn State for his doctorate and I was very lucky to get a job at Penn State. Someone had resigned in August and we made some late decisions about where we would go and I was able to secure that job because I had two years of teaching experience and a master's, again, which was for teachers at the time was not different, but a lot.

JK: And what was the job at Penn State?

LC: We ran—not I, but I was one of the faculty. We ran the reading clinic in the summer for young people in the Pennsylvania environs, the area near Penn State, the main campus, to help these—and many of them were foster children. In other words, children in need—read better so that they wouldn't get destroyed by not being able to get the education that they would need to succeed later in life.

Not only did I get the job as the assistant to the director of the reading clinic, but that gave me the ability to become an instructor at Penn State because of the level of that job. I taught there, continued there for a while, began teaching courses in Psychology—Child Psych mainly. Child Psychology was, I won't say new, but it wasn't something that was professionalized as much in those days as it is today.

And I had this background in Child Psychology because my master's was in Child Psychology/Human Growth and Development, which was at Maryland. So I was employed at an instructor's salary. Well, I mean we were rich at this time. I also learned that being on the instructorship or above level, I was able to take, without charge, courses at Penn State.

So I worked, had two of my three wonderful children at the time at Penn State, took courses, and when my husband got his doctorate all I had to do for mine was write my dissertation, which was I think was eight credits. Well I couldn't do that before we left or before he graduated because that was, you know.

[1:05:02]

So we then moved to Broomall, Pennsylvania, which outside Philly, and I spent many long, late afternoons and evenings writing my dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania Library. It wasn't that far away and it was a wonderful, quiet place and with all the research material that I needed. I don't remember when I got my
doctorate, but it was two years maybe to write, three, I'm not sure because I had a few other things to do.

JK: Raising children, having jobs—

LC: I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

JK: I said raising your children and having a full-time job gets in the way of getting your degree as fast as you would have planned.

LC: Well, yeah. I didn't want the dissertation to get in the way of my children, rather than the other way around. But I had help along the way. My mother came to live with us and was very helpful in balancing our lives. So it goes, here I am. I taught at Tufts for fourteen years, I taught at West Chester College.

They used to call it Teacher's College. Now they always throw out the word teacher. West Chester College, I taught at Temple for a year when we lived in the Philadelphia area. And it's been a wonderful ride. And I do owe a great deal to Johns Hopkins, how it worked out. I walked the steps up from there.

JK: And your son also graduated, has a degree from Hopkins, correct? Your son has a degree from Hopkins as well?

LC: Yes, he's here. He has his PhD from Hopkins. He has his undergraduate degree from Columbia and his PhD from Johns Hopkins. I don't think there was a middle degree. He got his master's someplace along the way. I forget. I apologize. I have three successful, but more than that, decent human beings that make a difference in the world.

This is what I feel is the important thing. God, I'm thinking about it. I can't count either. I was never good at math. And a large number of grandchildren. I'll have to count them for you, but I won't. And two great grandchildren—give me a minute—two great and one more coming along. Right? Yeah, I think that's right.

JK: Well that's wonderful.

LC: So I guess when you start early you can do all this.

JK: Is there anything else you want to add that I haven't asked you about?
LC: I can't think of it. I'm writing my memoirs now and so yes, and I have written two children's books and two adult books and I'm writing my memoirs as we're talking today because I think it's very important for people to know more about their parents and their lives than for example I think they do today. I never did.

I lived with my family, but I never really knew about their childhoods. As a psychologist I figured it out. And I think it's important. It gives you some of the stability you need in the world we are now in, which is crazy. I don't like to talk about that for a while.

[1:09:59]

And so that's what I'm basically doing now. And we are on this trip besides to meet with you and extend your understanding and mine of how I got lost here and how Joyce got lost and maybe Tommie Divinni. I don't know. And why I was put in the business school. Interestingly enough, in the business school they addressed me as Dr. Lonnie Carton, which I have the degree but it wasn't here, so I'm really mixed up here.

JK: What do you mean they put you in the business school? Is that the school at Johns Hopkins that corresponds with you these days?

LC: I don't know. The next one I get will say Dr. Lonnie Carton, School of Business. That's exactly what it says and I must have gotten—in the last five years. They didn't come before then. I just don't know.

JK: Well what I can tell you from, if you'd like to know, I can tell you what I was able to find about how Johns Hopkins categorized you in their records. So you're listed as having a degree from the teachers' college, McCoy College. And I think the reason for that is because they were not officially accepting women into the College of Arts and Sciences.

So for administrative purposes, if you got the BS degree, which was the degree that McCoy College granted, from an outside perspective you were no different than those students, although from your story you were clearly different because you never had another class with another woman.

LC: Right. I understand.
JK: You're obviously a part of the Arts and Sciences classes. We had not heard the story before. Certainly I've seen some correspondence in the archives with Dr. Bamburger, who is head of the McCoy College that she was accepting women as four-year students, but it was always under McCoy College. I wish we could talk to Dr. Bamburger because I often wonder about her. She was the first female full professor at Hopkins and—

LC: What year?

JK: When did she get her professorship? I can't remember. She left Hopkins in 1947 and after she left I found a memo from the president of Hopkins to her replacement, and he said as you know, Miss Bamberger, he called her, although she had a doctorate. It was his way of putting her in her place.

Miss Bamberger started a four-year experiment without authorization and we're glad that that's over now and I'm glad to know that you, Dean Horn, her successor, support the part-time principle. So that's as close as I can find in the archives to an acknowledgement of what was going on. So it's a shame we can't talk to Dr. Bamberger because I suspect she was trying to advance women in whatever means were available to her.

LC: And didn't succeed too well, unfortunately.

JK: Because we didn't know about it, right?

LC: I mean she left, or at least she gave up the—we don't know. You're quite right.

JK: And she did have a career after Hopkins teaching and was fairly well known. So I often wonder why she—

LC: Where did she go after Hopkins?

JK: She taught at a lot of private schools in Baltimore from what I can tell.

LC: She had a lot of visions about child growth that were new and proved to be right. I didn't realize she left that early.

JK: But I also wonder if perhaps that's why they asked you to transfer after a year.
LC: I think that's it. Because she left and there was not another stalwart who was interested in pursuing the battle, if you will, the change. I must have taken a course from her early because I had her for a course. And if she left in '46 that would have been—

JK: You would have had two semesters and a summer with her, maybe.

LC: Yeah, probably. But no, she was—I can just visualize her.

JK: Do you remember, what was she like?

LC: She was heavy-set, large face. She was a large woman. She was as bad as I am—she talked all the time. You had to be a good listener. [1:15:57]

She had so much in her that she wanted to give that she—and she not only talked about this, this, this and children, but she gave you examples. So much was anecdotal because she had experienced so much. She was just not a book person. But she was a large woman. I don't think she was married.

JK: I'm not sure.

LC: She did not have children of her own, at least at the time when I took the one course from her. I didn't realize, of course at that time, that she, too, was so alone here in certain ways. Because even though she was on the faculty, she was working in a field which was not—what word am I looking for?

As academically professional as some of the liberal arts. Kids, what do you have to know about kids? You have them. That was an older attitude. What do you have to know about them? You feed them, room—bed, board and room, whatever—which of course was not correct and there was a certain knowledge that we learned and are still learning, the difference between kids and their brains, their everything. But that's interesting. Well it's been a pleasure talking with you.

JK: Thank you. I can't thank you enough. You've filled in an interesting gap in the record that we didn't even know was there, so it's really wonderful to hear your stories. Thank you so much.

[Addressing family present in the room] Is there anything that you would like to hear?
Debbie Riemer: The one thing I'm curious about because I had not heard exactly the way my mom told the story today is what made her, knowing what her plan was, say to that teacher who was going to flunk her, “Okay, I promise I'll never be a teacher.”

JK: Did you hear her question?

Debbie Riemer: I wonder where she got that from.

JK: Did you hear the question?

LC: No, I did not hear the question. I can't even see you.

Janis Bergman-Carton: I think the teacher that you didn't like, Mom, did he say promise me never to be a teacher or did he say promise me you'll never teach geology?

LC: I may have told them the story, I'm sure I did, that could well be. It's a blank. I told you “teach.” She's probably right.

JK: He might have said promise me you'll never teach geology?

LC: That he said geology. And I mumbled under my breath, how could I? I don't know anything. That could well be. You're probably right.

Janis Bergman-Carton: Another distinction that you made in speaking, telling the story was that—and again, to set the times you did feel so appreciative to Hopkins because those were the expectations women had at the time in terms of even the stuff you got from professors and kids and coming in early to class so you wouldn't have to sit, you made all these adjustments because that was expected of women, even bright women, at the time.

LC: She's absolutely right. And believe it or not, and that's what I explained to young people I work with or some when I worked at Tufts should know. I would say, well let me tell you what it used to be like. I had a Tufts student—you know in the days of protesting I was teaching at Tufts and the students protested for everything. Not everything, but it was a protest age.

One of my students is going with a placard instead of entering my class. Not that I was upset. If they want to learn, learn. I said, “What are you protesting?” And she said, “I don't know, but I'm protesting!” And that was that time. In my time it would have been
we would have carried placards that said, I'm making this up of course, thank you so much for allowing us to be near you guys.

[1:20:04]

We had very little expectation of our own worth, really, in that way. We had worth in other areas, but not in competing with men, not in being in their, I won't say company. I'm not talking about romantically or that, but I'm talking in competing in a world where you do something, you get paid for it. And I was grateful. Today I think a lot of women would say, “Hey wait a minute. Do you know there are laws against that?”

JK: But in the absence of laws, I think it takes courage just to be there and to take what's being offered to you.

LC: I didn't feel threatened in any way. I was joking saying today the student who said this is our territory could have had a gun. See, times have changed and that's what's so hard to understand how I didn't feel threatened in any way and I didn't even feel mistreated. I did not feel mistreated. I fought many battles in my time but not in those times. Not in those times.

JK: It's interesting. Your story—I've also interviewed a woman who started as an undergraduate at Hopkins in 1970 in the first class of women—

LC: '72 I think you're—

JK: Well they started as freshman in 1970 and graduated four years later in '74.

LC: What happened to those women? Well, different times.

JK: But you would be surprised at the similarities. She talked about going into a class and sitting down and then men would get up and go sit somewhere else. They didn't want to sit near her. And some professors were very kind and others weren't. So it took a long time.

LC: It lasted a long time. Well, that's interesting to hear.

JK: Well, thank you so much.

LC: Thank you. It's a pleasure. You'll help me write my memoir book.
JK: Yeah, it's a good way to jog your memory.

LC: That's right.

[End of Audio]