

Marysa Navarro
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
Dartmouth Community and Dartmouth's World
October 26, 2012 and March 14, 2013

DONIN: Okay. Today is October 26th, 2012. My name is Mary Donin. We are here in Rauner Library with Marysa Navarro, a professor emeritus of history at Dartmouth College and a hundred other things at Dartmouth College, but we'll just give you professor emeritus right now.

NAVARRO: No, an emerita.

DONIN: That's right, emerita.

NAVARRO: [Laughs.]

DONIN: That's my first mistake.

NAVARRO: First mistake.

DONIN: I'm nervous.

NAVARRO: [Laughs.] I hope you aren't, because you're going to make me nervous.

DONIN: No, no, no.

NAVARRO: And we can't have a nervous conversation.

DONIN: No, we can't. All right, so the first thing we want to hear from you, Professor, is tell us how it was for you coming to Dartmouth back in 1968. You were the first woman hired off the open market to be here in the history department. And since we're trying to document what the Dartmouth community was like over the years, tell us what you found here when you came.

NAVARRO: What I found was a very lovely place, very self-enclosed, very isolated. I thought very isolated. I did not know that it had begun to loosen its strictures and in fact had begun to become quite open, or it was beginning to be quite open. But to me, very isolated and very self-enclosed and very prone to

contemplating its navel and enjoying that very, very much, and looking at everybody who did not seem to fit with a little bit of indifference or contempt.

I felt that very, very, very, very strongly, and also in my case I also felt a great deal of curiosity and an attempt— persistence in making me feel like an outsider and like an odd creature, a creature that did not fit the environment. And I didn't fit the environment, although Dartmouth had all sorts of women who worked in the library for many years and diligently, and there were some wonderful—some of my oldest friends at Dartmouth have been librarians. So there were women, and there were women in all departments, because I don't think there was a single department that had a male secretary.

There were no women. Women were invisible except on weekends, when the girls were brought in, and everybody was very spiffy and well behaved, at least when they crossed the Green, but that was it. There was an invasion, and the rest of the time, there were no women.

So when I went to my first faculty meeting, I walked around, and I did not fit the female pattern, either, of being in the library or being a secretary or being the wife of a faculty member, because most of them were married. Then I was the odd bird, and I was the stranger in our midst.

DONIN: So your gender made you the stranger.

NAVARRO: Absolutely. But it was not only that. [Chuckles.] It was not only the fact that I was a woman but I was divorced, and there were no divorces on campus yet, at that time, not as many as there would be later on. But anyway, the issue—I plan to say everything that I think.

They hadn't started, really. So I was divorced, and I had a child, and there was no visible man around me, so I was — we were a single-headed family. Plus I was—I am a Spaniard, and I did speak, as I still do, with an accent, which was very difficult to place. I had a name that people could not pronounce. I refused to help by pronouncing it in English, so I pronounced it the way I had been brought up to pronounce it, which is in Spanish.

And then I became—oh, and I was divorced, a Spanish—that means—Spanish-speaking people at that time were not called Latinos, nor Mexican-Americans. There was no generic name for them yet.

DONIN: Ah.

NAVARRO: But I did know that there was a vulgar denomination for us, Spanish-speaking—and that's "spics." So I was a spic, and I was a woman, and I was a Catholic, and "mackerel snapper," as I was called, which is another expression that I discovered in a very WASP-ish environment. But that was not extraordinary because there were Jews, a few Jews. There were two or three Catholics in the whole college. I mean, the place was really out of the 19th century or the early 20th century.

And so therefore I stuck [out] like a sore thumb, but there were enough people around, a few people around with whom I could find—I could talk, and I could like the same food that they liked and we would commiserate about not having the kind of food you found in New York, where I had lived before.

And at the same time, I was enormously happy because I had a set of colleagues who could not have been better, and I always felt that the history department, when it was at Reed Hall in this very old building which I loved—and I'm sorry, but I don't like Carson [Hall], and I almost didn't move there. I made a fuss about moving there. But anyway, Reed Hall and members of the history department were a very special group of people, and I just found myself supported, embraced, delighted to be among them because they seemed to be happy to have received me and to make room for me.

DONIN: What did the students make of you?

NAVARRO: The students? Very interesting. I have—I still have friends from the time that—from these early years, when I had only male students. I went to Cuba. I went to Cuba in March. I took a Dartmouth trip to Cuba, and one of the persons there was a former student of these first generations, who went to

Cuba because I was leading the group. And I had him in several classes here.

So I just—they were—they received me well. I think that they were curious about me. I was young, not entirely ugly, and I have a sort of a friendly personality, so we got along. And I loved what I did, and they were very receptive to me. I think that in all the years that I have taught at Dartmouth—that is, forty-two years—only once did I have a confrontation with a student, and it was after women were admitted, before there was an equal number of men and women, or more parity, as we called it.

And there was a period in which there were particular tensions because of the uneven number of men and women, and I think that made things even worse for them. You know, there was a silly boy who was, I thought—who was, I thought, very much—had an attitude which was unacceptable to me. And I said, “If you don’t change, I’m walking out of this classroom,” and he didn’t change, and I was about to walk out of the classroom, and a gentleman who teaches at Mount Holyoke now and who was a student but he was a junior and this was a sophomore, said, you know—I left, but I heard him say, “You know, this is not right.” I don’t know what happened. They fixed it, and I was in my office, and this colleague (now, at Mount Holyoke) came and said, “I’m sorry for what happened. Would you please come back? Everything is fine.” And so I came back. And the student apologized afterwards to me, after the class was finished, and everything went as if nothing had happened. Only once, in forty-two years.

DONIN: Amazing.

NAVARRO: And I was—some of them have said I was a very tight—I was very demanding as a teacher, and I did not give grades, A’s, easily. And those who received them were proud of their work, and those who did not deserve an A never got them, and it didn’t matter who they were. And I have students who—[chuckles]—who, I see them years after, male students of that period say, “You gave me a B-plus!”

DONIN: [Laughs.]

- NAVARRO: One of them stopped me in Cambridge not too long ago, “In your course...” Well, they still remember. I hope they remember whatever they had to read as well.
- DONIN: Yes.
- NAVARRO: But anyway, I—so despite the fact that I just—the rules that I applied in the classroom and for work were the same for everybody. I did not have problems with students. I know they complained. And, of course, if you were a member of the *Dartmouth Review*, you never took my courses.
- DONIN: Hah!
- NAVARRO: But aside from that, my courses were—I had large courses. Students came, and we worked very hard, and I loved my teaching at Dartmouth.
- DONIN: So you were here for, what, two years before women came. Women started coming on an exchange program.
- NAVARRO: Yes, and I was in charge of the exchange—of the students who wanted to take history courses, yes. And it was nice. But there were very few.
- DONIN: Yes.
- NAVARRO: You did not notice them, really. It’s only when they began to come—when the decision was made that you saw the difference. Yes.
- DONIN: Yes, I heard a wonderful folklore story about you, about losing—about a bet you made with a member of the board of trustees.
- NAVARRO: No.
- DONIN: On the vote?
- NAVARRO: No.
- DONIN: Then it was miswritten in the paper here.

NAVARRO: Yes. I wrote to *The D*, the [alumni] magazine , correcting the whole story.

DONIN: Oh, did you?

NAVARRO: My version is printed. I have a copy of it.

DONIN: Oh, I should look for it, then.

NAVARRO: Yes. The story is that the night—the day before the trustees were supposed to vote, there was a party at *The D*, *The Daily D*.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: *The Daily D* had been very supportive of coeducation, and there were two students (who are both lawyers now)—three of them, and two are lawyers and one is a newspaperman. In any case, they were working on *The D*, and they invited me to a party. Arthur Luehrmann, who was teaching in the physics department then, was there. And everybody got very excited about the vote tomorrow—

DONIN: The vote.

NAVARRO: —and everybody was drinking a little bit of beer or—I don't think there was any wine. There was no wine then. There was beer, and I'm not a beer drinker, but I drank beer.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: In any case, I said, "Oh, I bet you they're going to vote against." I spent a very, very many hours working for coeducation, but, as usual, as *cábula*, I said no so that yes happens. So I said, "It's not gonna happen." And, of course, half the room said, "Yes, it's gonna happen!" "Ah, I bet you it's not gonna happen." "What will you do if they win?" And it was the students. It was with the students and of them.

And Jerry Johnson, who was editor of *The D*, said, "What are you gonna do if you lose?" And I said, "Well, I'll get dressed like a football player," I said, "and I'll run around the Green."

DONIN: if they win or—

NAVARRO: “If I lose,” and that is because they vote coeducation, “I’ll get dressed as a football player and I’ll run around the Green.” And so they said, “Okay.” “And if they do, then I will dress like a woman and I’ll go to Parkhurst and ask for a job.” And I said, “Fine.” We shook on it. And that was it.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: And then the following morning, of course, they had voted, and I heard on the radio at 12:00, “Go to the mast because there’s going to be an event.” And so I started really being very nervous about it. Before, I had a class at eleven. Before going to class, Jerry Johnson was in my office and said, “Well, you’re running, aren’t you?” And I said, “No, I’m not running.” “You’re not going to—” “Yes, I am not running.” And he said, “But you have to run.” And I said, “No, only if you get me an outfit as a football player.” [Both chuckle.] “And you go and get it from the gym.”

DONIN: [Chuckles.]

NAVARRO: “Okay, you got it.” And I said, “Ahhh!” and I went to class. Well, I went back to my office after class. And I said, “I want the big—I want the helmet and the big shoulder pads.” So, in my office were the shoulder pads and the helmet. And so I put it on. And he said, “Kemeny’s going to be giving you a bouquet of flowers because”—what’s her name? The woman who was his assistant—

DONIN: Oh, um—

NAVARRO: Lu Sterling [Martin].

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: “Lu has got him out of a meeting, and she got flowers, and she’s waiting for you. They’re waiting for you.” And so I had no other recourse but get out of Reed Hall and start running like a football—and those miserable kids on the side shouting, “Faster and faster!”

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: And then when I stopped—I only did from Reed Hall, in front—the library and to the mast. And when I got there, Kemeny gave me a kiss and a bouquet of flowers, and that was it.

DONIN: That's great. That's a great story.

NAVARRO: It's a nice story.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: But in a way, it's symbolic of the changes that were in fact happening at Dartmouth, and somehow we were not aware. That's why he said even by the time I came—I mean, Kemeny came two years after I came.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: I mean, I knew Dickey, but Kemeny came after, two years after, and so—and Kemeny was a very important president, in my opinion. But he was also a very great change from the Dickey years. So therefore, you have—and I have learned with the years that, however, there is a great deal of continuity between the Dickey years and the Kemeny years. But, at the same time, the differences were there, and they were very important. And sometimes we didn't see them. I didn't see them, in my opinion, because I couldn't really gauge how it was much before I had arrived, because I insist—the fact that I was hired is an indication—the fact is a truth—the proof that it had begun to change, because I have a very dear friend, very dear friend who was not hired at Dartmouth the year before. And I always tell—and I tell her, and she knows that I was hired under her cadaver. She had to leave with her husband. They were not hired by the department. And she had a PhD as her husband had a PhD. The husband was hired, but she was not given anything, any positions of any kind, even temporary or whatever.

So therefore, the only thing that I know is that as a result of that—because they lost two good persons by not wanting to give a job to her—I think that by the time the following year, when I came, they were ready to look at me.

- DONIN: Well, to put this in context for history later on, before you came, there were only two women on the faculty, right? Hannah Croasdale—
- NAVARRO: Hannah Croasdale, who was not a faculty member—
- DONIN: No.
- NAVARRO: She was a researcher. Unfortunately—she was a very distinguished academic, and there was a young woman in the math department.
- DONIN: Oh! I was thinking of Colette Gaudin.
- NAVARRO: No. No, no. Well, Colette—no. Colette was a lecturer for I don't know how many years.
- DONIN: Before she was—
- NAVARRO: And she went from lecturer to associate professor after my arrival. But there was a woman—she left the college at the time when the students took over Parkhurst.
- DONIN: Oh, yes.
- NAVARRO: She was—
- DONIN: I have her name.
- NAVARRO: L.P.—I can't remember her name right now.
- DONIN: We can add her name later.*
- NAVARRO: Yes, you have to.
- DONIN: The math department.
- NAVARRO: And then there was a woman in—there was a doctor in the medical school.
- DONIN: Yes.

* Dona P. Strauss

- NAVARRO: And there was Rhona Mirsky.
- DONIN: Oh, yes. Yes. Okay.
- NAVARRO: But I didn't come with [a] husband. I didn't come with any of those things that made the pattern for other people or prevented to do like Hannah Croasdale, who should have been in the ranks and all that. I'm the one with a clean, you know, path, if you wish, or the regular path, as it was dictated and acceptable for men.
- DONIN: Well, you had a great quote in one of the research articles, which says, you were the first—you were quoted as saying, "I was the first woman to get tenure like a man."
- NAVARRO: Like a man. It's true.
- DONIN: [Chuckles.]
- NAVARRO: It's true.
- DONIN: I like that. [Both chuckle.]
- NAVARRO: And the one who picked that up and even did a poster with it was the chair of the department, Lou Morton—
- DONIN: Oh, yes.
- NAVARRO: —who is a sort of a—he's the best example of how wonderful the department was.
- DONIN: The history department.
- NAVARRO: Yes.
- DONIN: So tell me about—and then we're going to be finished. Tell me about how other faculty besides history reacted to you or related to you.
- NAVARRO: The men or women?
- DONIN: Well, there weren't any women.
- NAVARRO: No, but except—well, there were some instructors—

- DONIN: Oh, yes.
- NAVARRO: —in the English department, Marilyn Baldwin.
- DONIN: Right, right.
- NAVARRO: There were women in the French department, in the romance languages department, Sices, Jacqueline Sices.
- DONIN: Yes, right.
- NAVARRO: Oh, there was a couple from Germany, Henry Ehrmann and Claire.
- DONIN: Oh, yes, yes. Right, right. How about—
- NAVARRO: I haven't thought about all these people for years.
- DONIN: How about the woman who became the vice president for women, from Wellesley College, Ruth Adams?
- NAVARRO: No, Ruth Adams was—she became—when we went coeducational, Kemeny had the idea of getting a woman dean or something like that. As extraordinary as he was, he had a very—I want to be very careful about this. You know that he wanted the women across the river.
- DONIN: Yes.
- NAVARRO: And therefore he wanted to have—the model of women's education for him was the Seven Brothers and the Seven Sisters.
- DONIN: Right.
- NAVARRO: Which drove me nuts. And I'm the one who put [raps table three times] the motion on the floor of the faculty to get the women here. And I still don't know how on earth I did it because I was— it was thirty hours here. I was an assistant professor. No, second—
- DONIN: Well, you must have had support.

NAVARRO: Oh, it was almost unanimous. When I made the motion, it went through. But there's a very sad story there because by the time I came—not when I was hired, but by the time I came, there was another woman in the department who was a lecturer first, Jeanne Prosser—

DONIN: Oh, yes.

NAVARRO: —with whom I became very good friends. And Jeanne Prosser was put in the committee on coeducation and the committee that recommended that we go across the river. Jeanne Prosser was my friend. Jeanne Prosser was dying of cancer.

DONIN: Oh!

NAVARRO: And it was a very horrible thing because I would go and see her every afternoon, because by the time we had the debate on coeducation—and we talked, and we talked. And then the day before the meeting of the general faculty, I went to see her, and I said, “Jeanne, I've got to speak against you and against the motion from the committee.” And she said, “That's okay. We have been friends, and we'll continue to be friends.” So we cried a little, the two, and I left. And the following day, she got out of bed, and she went to that meeting. Nevertheless, I did speak against the motion, and my motion won.

The issue is that—the model of Ruth Adams was a sort of bisexual model internally. This is how I read it. And I, you know, never thought that Miss Adams, who was a perfectly fine person, had a role to play in this institution, and I don't think that it was the best decision that Kemeny made in terms of coeducation, with all the respect and enormous respect and affection that I had for him.

DONIN: Well, I think you're not alone in thinking that.

NAVARRO: That's good.

DONIN: Other people have said the same thing, that it wasn't a good appointment.

NAVARRO: No, it wasn't. It didn't do anything.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: It didn't help women.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: I don't think that women needed that kind of help. It was not to be represented at the top.

DONIN: Okay, I'm going to turn off the machine now because it's time for you to go down Main Street.

NAVARRO: Yes.

DONIN: And Natalia deserves a big round of applause, right?

NAVARRO: Natalia, you're a jewel, darling.

DONIN: She *is* a jewel. Okay.

[Recording interruption.]

DONIN: Today is March 14th, 2013. My name is Mary Donin, and I'm here in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the David Rockefeller Center with professor emerita of Dartmouth College Marysa Navarro.

NAVARRO: You're a fast learner.

DONIN: Huh?

NAVARRO: You're a fast learner.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: You called me emerita. [Laughs.]

DONIN: I'll never make *that* mistake again!

NAVARRO: [Laughs.]

DONIN: I've been practicing that.

NAVARRO: Goody-goody! [Laughs.]

DONIN: Okay, Professor. So we're going to pick up sort of where we left off last fall and jump into the late '60s, when you got there, and you're going to fill us in on some of the background information of life at Dartmouth before coeducation came along.

NAVARRO: Okay. You know, I mentioned that it was a very masculine place, where women were invisible, even if we existed somehow. We were invisible because we were not supposed to be there except in several certain positions: in the library or being secretaries in the department. I think that—I want to insist on the fact that my coming there, my coming to Dartmouth was a sign of the changes that had begun to take place at Dartmouth, about which I knew very little because the place seemed to me terribly, terribly self-centered and terribly isolated and terribly parochial, in a way.

But then, at the same time, I understood, with time, that there were changes which had taken place in the years before I arrived, in four, five or six years, that made it possible for me to come there and for the changes that took place later on to really unfold.

And I want to say here that the presence of President Dickey was crucial, in a way, for the coming of the man like President Kemeny afterwards, who was, to me, the perfect president at that moment, though he was so hard to get along and got so angry at times. And he was an enormously bright man.

In contrast, I was not impressed with Dickey at the time, Dickey was an older man, had been at Dartmouth for many, many years. This is now a wise woman speaking and not the hothead that I was when I went to Dartmouth and could see; therefore, I saw in president—what is his name, the one before Kemeny?

DONIN: Before Dickey?

NAVARRO: Yes, Dickey, Dickey. And I could see Dickey as a very old man, who was very tired and who did not understand what was going on, though he, I think, had been absolutely

essential in the transformation of Dartmouth and in the opening up of Dartmouth to the world with his great—the program that he had for seniors and also pushing the students—

DONIN: The Great Issues course?

NAVARRO: The Great Issues course. He was also very important—he opened the students to the world, to the world, even if it was in Mississippi. He told them to get out and go, and he opened—even the dormitories, if we take the parietals as symbolic of a type of restriction and monastic environment that was supposed to exist in a place like Dartmouth.

But that was not visible to me. I could not appreciate that. What I saw is that at the time of the fights, the debates over Vietnam, he seemed to be hurt by the students, by those who came back. He told them to go, and those who came back and were not ready to obey, be satisfied with what was,—he had difficulty with that.

DONIN: It's been said that he stayed probably ten years too long, because the '60s were very difficult for him, Dickey.

NAVARRO: Yes. I don't know if it was ten years, but some years, I would say five years, because I still think that he—he told them incredible things in those last ten years, and I know about that because some years ago, I was asked to address the reunion of the Class of 1968, and Robert Reich spoke and what's his name? Oh, the pastor, the chaplain from Yale, who lived in Vermont? Oh, my God!

DONIN: We'll insert the name—

NAVARRO: Okay.

DONIN: —when it comes to us.*

NAVARRO: Okay.

DONIN: He's the chaplain from Yale?

* William Sloane Coffin

NAVARRO: He used to be the chaplain for Yale, who became very anti-war at Yale, and then he came, and he moved—oh, my! He moved near Hanover, and he died near Hanover. He also became—after Yale, he was a chaplain in New York, in the big church at Columbia University, near Columbia University. And he—anyway, I won't try, because otherwise I'm going to spend half an hour looking for his name.

DONIN: It'll come to you in the middle of the night. [Chuckles.]

NAVARRO: Robert Reich and I were the speakers. Robert Reich graduated in '68. And the chaplain was a very important person in '68, and that's the year I went to Dartmouth, and that's why they asked me to speak. It was, like, the twentieth year reunion. And for that talk, I did homework. I looked at *The Ds* and *Aegis* and all the materials in the decade before '68, and paying attention to the previous four years because that's—the world was impinging on Hanover, and the place was resisting enormously, but the students were ready to go.

And so what I found out there is that, in my opinion, what I saw happening is that the students were exactly the way Dickey had pushed them to be, had coaxed them to be: to be open to the world, to be open to new ideas, to think for themselves, to help their fellow man, and so therefore the consequences of action there were sometimes very difficult because they seemed to be very distant from the thoughts.

And so therefore that disturbed Dickey. He did not know what to do with that, and the students were somehow, I think, rather cruel because they were ready to do things that were not expected of them.

DONIN: Well, except they were reflecting what was going on all across the country.

NAVARRO: Exactly. And in that sense, they were true to the mission that Dickey had drafted for them, and he should have been very proud of it.

Then there was another thing that happened to me, and so therefore I—I went to Beijing in 1985—no, '95, at the time of the U.N. meeting, and I realized then, after doing some work, that if it hadn't been for something that Dickey did in the

1940s, when he was working for the State Department, the 30,000 women who went from all over the world to Beijing, to Huairou, which is where the NGOs met, the women met, we would not all of us have been there because he's the one who said, who asserted that at the United Nations it should not be a place where states discussed, governments discussed but also where civil society would, through their organizations, would discuss.

And so the non-governmental organizations that he put in the charter is what has allowed, in the '90s, the participation of people like me, like people who were displaced, people who did not belong, people who had no say in the government could have a say in the affairs of the world.

And so therefore I began to have an intellectual love affair with Dickey in my old age, and he had died by then, a long time, but I acquired an enormous respect and really thankful to what he had done in his life, both at Dartmouth and in the world—in the United States and therefore the world at large. And when I received the chair, I spoke about that, and I thanked Dickey for that.

DONIN: So when you were a hot-headed young history teacher, you didn't appreciate it.

NAVARRO: I did not. I did not appreciate it, but it was good to be able to say I was wrong and, at the same time, to understand what he had done, and what he had done for the institution. And, yes, I think that the kind of changes that had begun to take place were very important for the transformation of the institution, and I think that one of the—what happened afterwards is that in the case of the presence of women in the institution, the institution was very slow at first to accept the fact that there were other institutions that were hiring women, and it was—let's remember that Dartmouth was the last of the Ivy to accept coeducation.

So to me, when I got there—or I got here—the first thing was, well, why shouldn't women be here? Especially because there was already a committee that was working on that.

DONIN: And they'd already sort of stuck their toe in the water—

NAVARRO: Oh, yes.

DONIN: —a little bit by allowing women to come as, you know, one-term students. The college exchange program was already happening.

NAVARRO: I thought that was the year after.

DONIN: Oh, was it?

NAVARRO: The year I came.

DONIN: The year you came.

NAVARRO: Yes.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: Because I was in charge of the ones dealing with history.

DONIN: Oh, yes, right.

NAVARRO: And they were from—

DONIN: Mount Holyoke, wasn't it?

NAVARRO: Mount Holyoke, and they were from—mostly from Mount Holyoke but also from—

DONIN: Well, the Seven Sisters.

NAVARRO: And Vassar and—yeah.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: And Smith was also there anyway, so the talk was there. And it was unavoidable. The only problem was the alumni and the board and a sector of the student body. I would say, on the whole, that the faculty was in favor of coeducation. There were people who voted against in the faculty, but they were a minority. And obviously, those who were involved in *The Daily D* were very much in favor of coeducation.

- DONIN: You told us that wonderful story last time, about the vote.
- NAVARRO: [Chuckles.] Yeah, about the vote.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- NAVARRO: And the bet.
- DONIN: Uh-huh.
- NAVARRO: And so there was support, and there was willingness to jump into coeducation, discussion of coeducation, which came at the same time that there were other issues, like Vietnam. So it was complicated. And it became a very exciting place.
- DONIN: Very!
- NAVARRO: Very exciting place.
- DONIN: Well, the debate over how they were going to actually make this happen was exciting,—
- NAVARRO: Yes.
- DONIN: —with the whole model of trying to pass the idea of having a separate women’s college across the river.
- NAVARRO: That was totally insane, in my opinion; it was hard to be against Kemeny on that one. But I think he was wrong. I think that many people in the institution were for coeducation but they were afraid they were not going get it because the board was against it, and the board was largely against it. And I think that Kemeny was right to be worried about it.
- On the other hand—and the fact is that we had to find all sorts of subterfuges in order to get the coeducation—
- DONIN: Well, that was how the Dartmouth Plan—
- NAVARRO: The year-round—yes, the Dartmouth Plan, the year-round operation. A very important part of the curriculum was transported to Spain, to Mexico, to France, to Germany, to Russia at the time, so that we could have enough beds for

students. All that was—they were subterfuges, but they worked.

DONIN: They did work.

NAVARRO: They did work and it became possible. But the biggest problem, I think, is that we needed to convince the alumni that nothing had changed the fact that women were there. That was wrong. That was very wrong. That was the second thing in coeducation process, in my opinion, that was not done properly, because the place *had* changed. The place became a different place because almost half of the population was different than the males that had lived there all of their lives. And so therefore to pretend that it didn't was deceitful and not very good for the students.

DONIN: Was it a purposeful holding back of information or just telling the story differently?

NAVARRO: It was telling the story differently. I don't think there was wrong information given to the alums—you know, the contact with the alums being as intense as it is at Dartmouth, only—like many other institutions, I don't think that it's very different in that sense. In any case, it was telling—you know, not lying but telling half-truths or partial truths, and also saying, well, we had a quota. And that only exacerbated—that created the kind of—

DONIN: Another problem.

NAVARRO: No, that created a problem that did not exist because it pitted the women against the men, or the men against the women, and then you begin to have an intensity of reaction against the presence of women, which was really disagreeable to them and uncomfortable and mean and inappropriate, totally inappropriate. So then there was another battle, which was to get the quota out.

DONIN: Which took a very long time.

NAVARRO: It took a long time, and it disappeared when President McLaughlin came.

DONIN: Or Freedman, I think, wasn't it?

- NAVARRO: No. No, no, it was under McLaughlin, I think.
- DONIN: That they reached parity.
- NAVARRO: Yes, yes, yes, yes. So—I believe so.
- DONIN: We can check that.
- NAVARRO: Yeah.
- DONIN: We can check that.
- NAVARRO: But that changed the situation. But I think that there were very few women faculty members.
- DONIN: Well, I was going switch us from students to faculty now.
- NAVARRO: You've changed the college, you changed the student body, but you don't change the professorate. So therefore, not enough. There were demands, or there were needs, not demands. There were needs on the part of the female students that were never unmet. They could not even be expressed if you want to. But you saw that once you got close to the students or the students got close to you.
- DONIN: Sure.
- NAVARRO: And there was a kind of relationship with those first generations that we established that I think was very exceptional, and that's because it was in a very contested environment, in a very unfriendly environment, an environment that had holes, pit-holes, and students fell in metaphorically.
- DONIN: In every aspect of their life.
- NAVARRO: Yes.
- DONIN: I mean, not just academics but athletics—
- NAVARRO: Social, athletics—well, athletics. It was bad, very, very bad. And because they didn't play football, American football, and they began to get some support for basketball and other

games and other sports, but the sports that were not—there was no opening for the women. “What is it that *you* want to play, and what is it that we need to do in order to”—no, that wasn’t it. And there was a threat at a time. I can’t remember when it was because I had a conversation with students, and I can’t believe it, but I kept saying, “Don’t go to Ty—don’t complain yet.” They wanted to sue the place because they wanted—I say I can’t believe it because I was calming them, because I think they would have at that time lost more, try to speak more and help them to deal with the athletics department and get more support, which they got in the end. But nevertheless, it took a long, long time.

DONIN: Well, Title IX finally came along, too.

NAVARRO: Yes, yes, to help them.

DONIN: Help them along.

NAVARRO: Yeah, yeah.

DONIN: And, of course, the Civil Rights Act with the affirmative action regulations came along.

NAVARRO: Yes, but that was there for a long while. That was there from the very beginning.

DONIN: From the beginning, Yes.

NAVARRO: It didn’t make any difference. Oh, there was a moment for the faculty that I wrote a letter to the COP, on which I was sitting, complaining that there were not enough—that women were not hired by the departments. And so what they did was to create a committee on the status of women, which they asked me to chair, and I was an assistant professor. And there was Jacqueline Sices, who was a lecturer in French, David Sices’s wife.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: He was the chair of the French department at that moment. She and I became the only two women in this committee, which had only senior members of the faculty, all male and all chairmen of departments, including Lou Morton, who was

the chair of the History department, who was my chair. And it was to talk about making the recommendations, and we made—that was in 19—when was it, '52? '6— No.

DONIN: It must have been—it was in the early '70s, I think.

NAVARRO: Yes. Yes.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: We made twelve recommendations. I got the gentlemen to agree to the twelve recommendations, which had to go to faculty. I can't remember the date now—

DONIN: We should—

NAVARRO: —get my vitae.

DONIN: “Recommendations of the Committee on Faculty, 1972.”

NAVARRO: Two!

DONIN: Yep, here it is.

NAVARRO: That's it. Okay. We had to present that to the faculty, and I had to speak to that. And there was a colleague of mine—no—well, it was a colleague who said, “Well, women cannot be mothers and professors at the same time.” In the floor of the faculty! Which I will never, never forget, and never forgive. I mean, colleagues could say those things as clearly as light and be absolutely satisfied with themselves after saying those things.

DONIN: And you were sitting there as a mother at that point in time.

NAVARRO: I was standing up! I had a wonderful daughter. [Chuckles.] I was a mother and I told him I was a mother. I was not—I don't... I gave him a very bad answer. I told him I was not a monster or something like that and that I was a professor and I was a mother, which he knew.

DONIN: Of course! Of course.

- NAVARRO: Which he knew. But anyway—so there was some resistance, and we did twelve recommendations, and only one didn't pass, which was the daycare center—
- DONIN: Oh, yes.
- NAVARRO: —which passed ultimately because they had to do it.
- DONIN: Well, I think later on, when they finally got an affirmative action officer—
- NAVARRO: Yes.
- DONIN: —they had to create—
- NAVARRO: They had to do it.
- DONIN: Yes.
- NAVARRO: And so everything that we recommended in '72—and I think that had helped enormously, the institution, because we were very much ahead of other institutions about those measures.
- DONIN: Really!
- NAVARRO: There was a moment—I think it was '75 or '76—we had more tenured women and we had more women in the ranks than most of the Ivies.
- DONIN: Who had gone co-ed ahead of Dartmouth.
- NAVARRO: Much earlier than Dartmouth. But we had—and I feel very proud of myself because I pushed at the level of the faculty and tried to—even about maternity leaves and all that. All that was done earlier than in other places. And I think it worked. The institution was responsive. The History Department was very responsive and responsive. There were enough people—and not only the History Department—who appreciated this kind of—the fact that there were some departments like the language departments, which had a lot of women, and so I think that they began to change their views.

The English department took a hell of a long time to change, and part of the work that I did at that time was to go and talk to the department heads and say, “Why aren’t you hiring women?” Before we did the report. And I would be told, “There are not”—there was a formula used then. I can’t—not adequately prepared, no.

DONIN: Wasn’t the answer that there weren’t enough in the pipeline, who were coming up, —

NAVARRO: No, there were not—

DONIN: —who were Ph.D.s?

NAVARRO: But they were not—no. First of all, they used an adverb, which meant that the women who were supposed to be hired had to be special.

DONIN: Special?

NAVARRO: No, “special” was not the word used. God, how can I have forgotten? But it meant that they needed to be trained, well, like the men are trained, but they never said that the men needed to be trained, but the women needed somehow—it was as if women could not be trained. That’s what they—

DONIN: You mean they needed more training beyond getting their Ph.D.

NAVARRO: That was the meaning of what they said, that they needed to be worthy of being considered or something like that. I can’t remember how it—and I could kick myself. I heard it so many times. And then they were—or, or that there were not enough women in graduate school, and we didn’t have—and, you know, —

DONIN: Was this just the English department or other departments?

NAVARRO: No, Anthropology department, Psychology department. Ooh! The sciences? Forget about the sciences.

DONIN: Yeah, I was going to say. So communities—social science—

NAVARRO: They were all the same. They were all the same. I never went to talk to the English—because I knew there were all sorts of women in English. There had been for generations. But nevertheless—and they had some when I began to do that. There were—Blanche Gelfant was not there. Blanche Gelfant came later. But Brenda Silver was already there. But sometimes—people came with—finishing their dissertations, you see. They hadn't finished their dissertation. Took longer than the men. Sometimes they had babies in the middle. And all that complicated their lives and became the reasons for letting them go.

And there were women, there was a large—in the early period, there was a great deal of revolv— Dartmouth was a revolving door.

DONIN: They came and left.

NAVARRO: Women came and left. Two, three. They couldn't make it or they didn't want to stay, or took the opportunity to get another job as soon as they could.

DONIN: Yeah. So, at the same time as you are lobbying—or whatever the word you want to use—the departments to hire more women, you also—you and other women, I think—wasn't there some sort of a group of both faculty and staff that initially came together to support one another?

NAVARRO: The caucus.

DONIN: The Women's Caucus. Organized the Women's Caucus. Yeah, that was the other thing that I organized, the Women's Caucus. And it was mostly faculty and librarians. Genevieve Williamson was in there. One who came—my dear friend later on was not there. Oh, God, she was wonderful. She died last year.

DONIN: Margaret Otto?

NAVARRO: Margaret Otto was not at Dartmouth.

DONIN: At that time, no.

NAVARRO: It was the—what's his name? Was the librarian.

DONIN: Lathem?

NAVARRO: Lathem.

DONIN: Ed Lathem?

NAVARRO: Ed Lathem was the librarian. But there were quite a few people—some people, a handful of people, which is quite a few at that time because they were, you know, talking with faculty.

DONIN: Yeah.

NAVARRO: And they were not—I think that to some extent, I think the women in the library were worried. They were afraid a little bit.

DONIN: In what way?

NAVARRO: That they would be penalized or punished.

DONIN: By joining the caucus?

NAVARRO: Yes, yes.

DONIN: Oh, interesting.

NAVARRO: Yeah. And I think that women like Genevieve, because she was married to Dick then—Williamson. And, you know, she was securing her job. She was the acquisitions person for the History department, and, you know, somehow she was there. And there were two or three more from the library.

And what we tried to do was to think about what is it to be a woman faculty member or to work in the institution, and so that's when we began to do things as well that had to do with changes in the institution. And little things. But I think then we complained a great deal because there were also always little things that we could complain about, from changing the pronouns in the faculty handbook to changing the pronouns for the students, to the pronouns in the library material. I mean, that's the kind of thing that needed to be done, and nobody cared about it unless you went after it.

- DONIN: It's a good thing you *were* hot-headed in your young years. You need the energy.
- NAVARRO: Oh, yes! [Chuckles.] Well, I had only one child and no husband. [Laughter.] And a lot of—but that was not the only thing that I did, because I did things outside. I mean, I worked for—*Ms. Magazine* came out, and I was on the international board. And then Gloria Steinem organized the Ms. Foundation, and I got involved in that as well. I got on the board. Then there was women's studies—
- DONIN: Well, that was the next thing.
- NAVARRO: Organizing, yes.
- DONIN: I mean, the work began to—
- NAVARRO: Pretty early, as well.
- DONIN: —create a body of—a curriculum.
- NAVARRO: Yeah, a curriculum. And I think I taught my first course—there were no books, no nothing.
- DONIN: No material.
- NAVARRO: Seventy-three. No materials. And I did not know what I was talking about. I mean, I was learning, and I studied, but it was inside the college, and it was also in meetings outside because in the historical profession, there were women beginning to talk about history, and then you had to go to meetings in New York and to meetings in Boston in order to find out what it was and learn what it was and then go to conferences, present papers and have big fights. So, I mean—
- DONIN: You had to create the body of knowledge.
- NAVARRO: We had to create the body of knowledge, do the research, do the thinking. And it was very exciting because there were all sorts of wonderful people working at this, on a variety of disciplines. And we organized a seminar at Dartmouth because then we got together because there was never—we

were in one department, different departments doing one or two persons thinking about this or involved in this or interested in doing it. So therefore what we did was to get together in a seminar, where we gave papers, the papers that we were preparing to go to conferences or whatever. We circulated them, and we talked about the papers there. We shared the scholarship.

Then, at the same time, we began to do courses which were interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary. And then got money from outside the college to get some courses going. We got to teach them for three years. Then we got some more money to prepare a curriculum. Then we had a curriculum. And we then—we did the birth of a department. It was like a department was created except this is not a department because people had appointments *in* departments and were released for a course or part of a course.

And the college was very chintzy about this because sometimes there was a very limited amount of money available for these programs.

DONIN: Was this now a program?

NAVARRO: Then we created a program, yes. First we had courses: courses in English, courses in history, courses in French and in philosophy. And then there were enough people—people were hired—women were hired—women scholars were hired, and then they came with that interest, or they were willing to teach one course or part of a course. And so we had a curriculum, and we got support. And we got approval, faculty approval to do that, yeah.

DONIN: Was there push-back from the faculty when you were building this program?

NAVARRO: Well, a little bit, a little bit. Not directly. Not directly. But it's very interesting because they at first did not pay attention, too much attention. But then, when we began—oh, we'd invite scholars to come and give talks, and it began to—what was being done in women's studies began to make some noise about certain issues of relevance, theoretical as well as practical. Then people began to pay attention, and there

was greater support. And people needed to be released from the departments in order to do that.

DONIN: And was there any—I mean, just putting this in context, while this was going on, did they already have in place other programs, for instance, focusing on Native American studies or Afro-American?

NAVARRO: Well, the first program, if I remember correctly, was Afro-American.

DONIN: That was in the '60s, I think.

NAVARRO: In the late '60s.

DONIN: Late '60s.

NAVARRO: Yes. Then I was involved in the Native American program. I was on the program, because when I taught Latin American history, I taught pre-Columbian civilization, and some of the Native American students took my courses, and so therefore I supported them when they began to make noise about that. Jim Wright and I—we went around the country also to find out what to do about Native American programs, and we got the program going, so I was very proud of that. I worked for three years on that committee and stayed, hired Michael Dorris. I was in the group that hired Michael Dorris.

And then I let go because then I got involved in the math—with Dwight Lahr, who was dean of faculty, and I was associate dean for the social sciences. We got a program on women in sciences. We got money from the Ford Foundation to get a program. And it was like pulling teeth from some people, but we began to move the issue in the sciences so that when Karen Wetterhahn came, there was at least some movement, at least some response among the scientists. And Dwight and I did that.

DONIN: So that was a whole new frontier you had to open.

NAVARRO: Yeah, because it was about women, but it was about the role of women in science. I remember Kemeny gave a talk. We had, like, a conference, and Kemeny gave a talk, because he had data about girls and the learning of mathematics.

Well, that was it. And then, of course, then I got involved in the Latin American studies in the last—so I was involved in the creation of Native American studies, of women’s studies, of the seeds for the women in science program, and Latin American studies. And then I had to write books. I had to get tenure. No, I got tenure. I got tenure at the right time. Five years after I got to Dartmouth, I got tenure.

DONIN: You were also sort of emerging on the national stage as well.

NAVARRO: Yeah, I was doing things outside and internationally, because I got involved in—things in Latin America—the women’s movement began later than in the United States, so I was an old hand for the Latin Americans, so therefore I saw as my role to be sort of a nexus between U.S. feminist scholarship and Latin American feminist scholarship, and also U.S. feminism in general and the Latin American feminist movement.

And when they began to meet regularly in ’81—the Latin American feminists began to meet—they met in Bogota for the first time. There were 250 women out of the whole continent who had the goal to call themselves feminists, and so I was there. And there had been very important meetings every two years, sometimes three but usually every two years. I’ve gone to all of them except for one. The Dickey Endowment has been very generous, supporting my participation, which ended up in articles. It was not only participating.

DONIN: Well, it ended up also in the classrooms at Dartmouth.

NAVARRO: Yes, absolutely, absolutely.

DONIN: What a marvelous—

NAVARRO: So it was really—

DONIN: —opportunity for the students.

NAVARRO: —very good. Yes, yes, it was very good. And so in that sense, I was blessed, but I was also—I mean, Dartmouth was very, very nice to me in that sense, although the year-

round operation and the R term—I hated the R term because I needed to get out and to go out, and I could only escape. I ran away and needed to come back. But anyway, I was always given the means to run away in order to come back, get material and come back.

So, I mean, this was a very important activity, which was reflected in my teaching and in my scholarship. And then, in a way, I was very lucky because also the kind of participation on U.S. NGOs allowed me to take part in the '90s in all the international meetings that took place. I was in Cairo—

DONIN: In Beijing. You mentioned, yeah.

NAVARRO: Yes, I was in the Beijing one. I went to Cairo, which was the U.N. population meeting, and, again, right but also that meant—it meant also that I was part of NGO boards or feminist boards having to do with working internationally, based in the United States. One was the Ms. Foundation. I got involved in an organization called the Global Fund for Women, which I was on the board, the chair of the board for ten years.

Then I got involved in—I was a very bad girl. I was the chair for fifteen years of an organization called Catholics for Choice, which was, again, connected—it was important for connecting feminist Catholics in Latin America, which began to be very active and *are* active and have transformed the landscape as well.

So, I mean, that's the kind of thing that I did on my spare time.

DONIN: But you brought it all back to use in the classroom.

NAVARRO: And I always brought it back to use in the classroom.

DONIN: That's what they call value added.

NAVARRO: Yes. [Chuckles.] Yes. Yes. And then, when I had the opportunity to leave, it was made very hard for me to leave Dartmouth, and so I stayed. As I said, when my painting was unveiled,—

DONIN: In 2010, I think it was, right?

NAVARRO: Yes, and it is a beautiful painting.

DONIN: It's beautiful, yes.

NAVARRO: Beautiful painting. I said it was so hard to get to love Dartmouth, so hard at first.

DONIN: This is the quote—

NAVARRO: Really??

DONIN: I'm gonna quote you.

NAVARRO: Did they say that?

DONIN: I'm gonna read this to you because I wanted you to explain it to me. This was at the unveiling of your portrait in 2009, excuse me.

NAVARRO: Nine.

DONIN: Let's see here. Where does it start? "I have had a hard time loving this institution, which I adore."

NAVARRO: [Laughs.]

DONIN: "However, Dartmouth made it difficult for me to love."

NAVARRO: Yeah!

DONIN: So what does that mean?

NAVARRO: Well, because I felt very—for years, I felt I didn't belong at Dartmouth.

DONIN: Why?

NAVARRO: Because everything that I wanted to do was so hard! I wanted to change it, and it didn't want to change or didn't want to change as fast as I wanted it to change. And I wanted it to change in order for me to be happy there. And I just thought—I did not realize, while I was living there the

first years, that I was very lucky to be there. [Chuckles.] I didn't feel that because of the hardness of the place, the difficulty—the quantity of things that I thought needed to be done and I was involved in, in order to change it was enormous. And you needed to be nice to people. I realized that these were my colleagues, these were my friends, these were the people that I lived with, that I worked with, that I saw most of the d— I mean, most of my life. You get up in the morning, and you go to work. And at a place like Dartmouth, you go to work at Dartmouth, then you socialize with Dartmouth people. Or you did at that time. So therefore you saw them day and night, or day and evening.

And so you ate with them, you worked with them, and it was a period where, as young faculty members, we had parties, we danced, so, I mean, your social life was Dartmouth. So it was all-encompassing.

DONIN: Some of that has to do with its isolation.

NAVARRO: Oh, yes.

DONIN: There was nowhere else to go.

NAVARRO: Oh, yeah, there were nowhere else to go.

DONIN: Very different than your urban experiences.

NAVARRO: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. From going from New York to—

DONIN: Columbia to—yeah.

NAVARRO: Yes. It was very, very different. And in that sense, it was stifling in a way, at times, and I needed to get out. I needed to get out, and I always felt that I was not like everybody else. I always felt different. I always felt that I was a foreigner, that I was trespassing. For many years.

DONIN: Was it your gender or your ethnicity?

NAVARRO: I think it was the whole thing.

DONIN: The whole package.

- NAVARRO: The whole package was absolutely wrong. But I say that when, in fact, the whole package was the best thing that could happen to me and could happen to Dartmouth.
- DONIN: You were the change agent that they didn't know they needed.
- NAVARRO: I worked very hard at changing it, and it did change, and that's why I love Dartmouth. I mean, I know this is—the young faculty, the new faculty look at me and say, you know, “She's nuts. She's an old fuddy-duddy.”
- DONIN: [Laughs.]
- NAVARRO: And I think that life—I mean, 42 years is a hell of a long time in my life. I've never lived as long in any other place as I have lived at Dartmouth. And I've given it my best shot. And I'm very pleased with what has happened,—
- DONIN: And, you know, this need—
- NAVARRO: —to me and them.
- DONIN: I was gonna say, this need that you arrived with, that you wanted to change everything—that wasn't for you alone.
- NAVARRO: Oh, no. Oh, no!
- DONIN: No.
- NAVARRO: Oh, no. Because I think that it was wrong, immoral, in theoretical terms as well. It was wrong that women could not be there. It was wrong that we were excluded. It was wrong that there were hierarchical things, though I have learned—I learned halfway, on this journey, that Dartmouth is a very democratic place.
- DONIN: How so?
- NAVARRO: Oh, in the history department, it doesn't matter who you are, you come in, you teach senior courses, seminars—you do like what everybody does. There are no courses kept for anybody. There is no hierarchy. The chair is *primus inter pares*. That is, we're all the same. There's a community—

there was. It has not always been that way. It was for many years, and I don't believe it is that way any longer, but that's the way it was when I went there. And I think that Lou Morton, who was—we used to call him “the godfather,” because he used to wear [chuckles] dark glasses during the day, inside and outside. That's as an assistant professor. He created an atmosphere in which you felt that you had—your say was as important as anybody else's, and the decisions that were taken by the associates or decisions taken by full, but you knew you would end up there and you would make those decisions.

But then, at the same time, you knew that—one example: I remember that there was—shortly after I arrived, months after I arrived at Dartmouth in the history department, the women at one magazine took over the magazine. It was—

DONIN: A Dartmouth magazine?

NAVARRO: No, no. New York. In New York.

DONIN: Oh.

NAVARRO: The writers. It was a women's magazine. It was not *House and Garden*, or something like that. And they took over the—

DONIN: The editorial offices?

NAVARRO: Editorial offices, and they asked for a series of things. And I was reading the article in *The New York Times*, in the lounge. And I saw a colleague, who was another assistant professor, and it was about even wearing pants in the office. And I said, “What do you think Lou Morton would say if he saw me arriving in pants?” And I had not seen him. He was at the door. And he said, “Absolutely nothing!” So the following day, I showed up with pants. [Laughter.] Because I was brought up that you wore skirts to work. So, I came. That was the atmosphere in the history department.

DONIN: But was that atmosphere—that didn't exist in all the departments.

NAVARRO: No, not in all departments, because I complained about the fact that there was no bathroom for me, and I requested the

change in the nomenclature, in the building. But this was done weeks after I arrived. But in the English department, there was a bathroom for men and another one for women until ten years ago, and the two shall not meet.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

NAVARRO: So the bathroom symbol is very much symptomatic of what could happen in one part of the college and in another part. And it had to do very much with the departments, with the department in which you were. There were departments which—it was hard for them to hire women, but they ultimately did it.

DONIN: How much influence does the current chair have on the culture of a department?

NAVARRO: Well, a lot, I would say. Influence, yes. Not on decisions but on the culture, yes, because it seems to me that there are things that are permitted or things that are not permitted, and maybe the faculty, the most cantankerous faculty will be able to say whatever they want, and the one who can say is the chair, “You shouldn’t—you know, maybe this is not the time to say this” or whatever it is. In a very gentle way you can create a different kind of atmosphere. That doesn’t mean I want this person over that one, on a choice or any kind of arbitrary decision on any issue. I don’t believe, at least in the departments in the social sciences that I know—I don’t believe that that’s the case.

DONIN: So there were departments where it was much harder for women to break into—

NAVARRO: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

DONIN: —than others.

NAVARRO: Oh, yes. Well, there was—it depends on the discipline also. The sciences have been horrendous, horrendous in relation to the humanities and the social sciences, but I would say that some social sciences have not been much better. And I think that in the humanities it varies. It varies. But the humanities and the social sciences have been more welcoming to women faculty, and the other ones, I think

that—have been slow, but have risen faster. Carol Folt, Karen Wetterhahn. The science—the disciplines have a different weight also,—

DONIN: Really!

NAVARRO: —in the minds of people. Oh, yes.

DONIN: In the minds of which people?

NAVARRO: Both men and women.

DONIN: Uh-huh!

NAVARRO: How many deans of faculties has Dartmouth had that were from the humanities?

DONIN: Well, Jim Wright.

NAVARRO: No, he's a social scientist.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

NAVARRO: And he was a president. Yes. But he was a man.

DONIN: Yeah.

NAVARRO: Man or woman—I'm counting on—I'm looking at the disciplines.

DONIN: So it's more scientists.

NAVARRO: Yup. Leonard Rieser was a physicist.

DONIN: Yeah. Right, right.

NAVARRO: Kemeny was—

DONIN: A mathematician.

NAVARRO: A mathematician. Gazzaniga—

DONIN: Scientist.

NAVARRO: A psychology scientist. I mean, you know, lots, lots, lots. And it's headier. It has more legitimacy. I think that's particularly true in the last decades, the last two decades and particularly the last one, in which, you know, I think technology and science are—

DONIN: Trumping the humanities.

NAVARRO: Oh, yes. Oh, there are places in which—where was it? I was reading the other day somewhere, at some—oh, it was in the University of Florida, in one of the universities of Florida, in which the humanities were being reduced to a minimum and the social sciences, and there were more practical and technological and scientific careers, more hiring, more investment.

DONIN: And so Dartmouth is just a reflection of what's going on.

NAVARRO: Yeah. Well, it has to do with the way the presidencies and the structure of the administration of the institutions have been going. You know, you fund raise, and you get money from the government to do—well, we don't get that much money from the government. The social scientists—only the hard ones, like psychology. Or, you know, the security studies in government, in a government department or things like that. History? English literature? No. You can get money in Arabic.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: But that's, again, it has to do with whatever changes and whatever political mania is out there, but they are the exception, whereas it seems to me that the sciences, social sciences get the kind of support that they want and probably don't need. But that's mean of me.

DONIN: [Laughs.] So how have the students changed in the 40 years you were at Dartmouth?

NAVARRO: Oh, the students have always been wonderful. The greatest thing about Dartmouth has been the students.

DONIN: Having women in the classroom as students—did that change how you taught—

NAVARRO: No.

DONIN: —or the culture of the classroom?

NAVARRO: Nothing. No, no, no, no. Not to me. Not to me. I think that since we accepted women, I think only once did I have one small class when I had only men, and that was weird because having women and men was the normal thing. So, no, I never—it never made a difference to me. I was just happy they were there. And then it just blurred and blended and—

DONIN: So did they—speaking of feeling that they belonged, did they find their voice right away in the classroom?

NAVARRO: In my class? If they didn't, I called on them. Heh heh! Actually, there's one student of mine who—her name was Susan Braden. She was—I had her as a freshman in the fall, in my freshman seminar, and she did her thesis with me and won all sorts of prizes. And so I had her all the years. She was in a class which had also José Fernandez, who was a member of the board of trustees, who went to work with Hillary [Clinton]. Okay, so they were together in that seminar. And it was a seminar on the conquest of America.

And they had to do three papers and a final, so she—they had readings every week, and I asked them to prepare questions. So José spoke. Everybody spoke. And Susan didn't say a word. And so, came the first paper. Straight A. And I said, *Who is she?*

DONIN: You didn't give As very easily, did you?

NAVARRO: No, I was mean. I was very mean. But she had a straight A. And so did José. It was an incredible seminar. Incredible! And so I let her go. Then in the middle, between the first and second paper, I said, "Susan, what do you have to say about this?" She got all red.

DONIN: Aw.

NAVARRO: All red and chu-chu-chuh and made a half staccato. She spoke in a staccato way. She gave me an answer. Then, the

following week, I asked her again another question. And so, second paper, straight A. She did all the papers straight A. Unless I forced her to speak, she didn't open her mouth. She hated me! [Laughs.] Passionately! Towards the middle of class—and then she relented, and then we became very, very good friends. I even had her daughter in class, in the last class I taught at Dartmouth.

So in any case, I would call on the women if they didn't speak, and then they sort of—you know, they began to get used to it, and they spoke, and they had something to say. I know with Susan I ended up finding out why Susan couldn't speak. There was a program, a television program, *Seven Is Enough or Seven Children*. Well, he was a member of the board of trustees, her father.

DONIN: Oh, Tom Braden.

NAVARRO: Tom Braden.

DONIN: Oh!

NAVARRO: It was one of the Braden kids. And she was in the middle, and she never said a word.

DONIN: She never got to say a word at home.

NAVARRO: But she got to say with me. And, as I say, I love her, and she's a wonderful person.

DONIN: So why was she so uncomfortable with you specifically? Do you know?

NAVARRO: Because I forced her to speak.

DONIN: Oh, I see.

NAVARRO: But, you see, I believed—Part of my teaching is you need to be able to formulate questions. You formulate questions from the text. You had to tell me what you read in the text, and you have to fight with the text. You have to disbelieve what the text says to you. And you have to explain why you react the way you react, especially in the seminar. And they all—they were all so bright, students. And they have been. I

mean, I've been very lucky. I have colleagues in the Latin American history field—Garthwaite and I have—Garthwaite is another one who has a lot of colleagues. And it's wonderful to be able to have these people like that to come out of working with them. You push them. You help them to be whoever they want to be. And the small classes are wonderful for that. And they make some people very nervous, but I think that they also allow them to acquire skills that they may not have naturally, let's put it this way. And then, of course, because they are who they are, they can use that.

DONIN: So you talked earlier—you mentioned earlier how you felt that you didn't fit into the community at Dartmouth because of the many ways that you were different from the community that you found there.

NAVARRO: Yeah.

DONIN: How did that change over time?

NAVARRO: [Chuckles.] By the time—I think it changed—is that I was accepted as the odd one and as the maverick, the one who would do the things that were out of the ordinary. And I was coming from validation from the outside as well, so therefore that was okay. And it just—I think that there was an acceptance that I didn't have to become a Yankee like everybody, despite the fact that when I became a citizen of the United States—

DONIN: What year was that? While you were at Dartmouth?

NAVARRO: Oh, while I was at Dartmouth. It was in the '80s, and I went, and I studied and all that. I was given, by my colleagues, a hard hat,—

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: —a baseball, an American flag and all the symbols of Americanization. [Laughs.] So anyway, despite all that, I didn't need them in order to belong to this place, and I accepted, after 15 or 20 years, that it was okay. But it was the first 20 years which were hard. [Laughs.]

- DONIN: Well, in the first 20 years was when you were doing all this work to make Dartmouth welcoming not only for faculty but for students, the women.
- NAVARRO: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- DONIN: And all your hot-headed steam was making progress.
- NAVARRO: It was. It was. So after that, then I felt comfortable. I felt comfortable, and I began to enjoy it. And I also saw that it actually gave me a great deal of freedom to do the things I wanted to do, both at Dartmouth and outside.
- DONIN: Well, one role that you no doubt had at Dartmouth that we haven't talked about is mentoring younger women, whether they were faculty or students, not necessarily in the scholarly field but in your activist role.
- NAVARRO: Well, I don't know. I didn't do that consciously. I may have. I don't know. That, you would have to ask my students. I don't know if I did, because those things that I did were necessary—I needed to do for who I was, for who I was becoming, rather. But that was it. I did not—well, I didn't realize that I was a sort of a pioneer or a trailblazer or whatever it is that you call these people: you're the first at opening spaces and et cetera.
- I also know that this—I did not know that it had the consequences that it had, one, because you became either a role model or you were resented because you had done it.
- DONIN: Did you sense people resented you?
- NAVARRO: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.
- DONIN: Women? Or men? Both?
- NAVARRO: Women. Women. Women.
- DONIN: Were they threatened by you, do you think, or...just uncomfortable with the activist role you played?
- NAVARRO: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

- DONIN: Uh-huh. And this was among certain specialties?
- NAVARRO: I would say. I would say certain specialties. There was a great deal of jealousy and anger. I had done everything—I had begun all sorts of things. I had begun everything, and so therefore my nose was in everything. My hand was in everything. And I think that I needed to be punished.
- DONIN: Why?
- NAVARRO: Because I had grown too big for my britches.
- DONIN: [Chuckles.] You didn't know your place, as they used to say.
- NAVARRO: I did not know my place.
- DONIN: That used to be a favorite phrase.
- NAVARRO: Yes, yes, yes. I think that is the case. Not everybody. Not everybody.
- DONIN: Did this come from the top? I mean, you didn't sense presidents felt this way about you.
- NAVARRO: No, on the contrary. Both presidents were—all the deans—the dean of faculty or whatever were most supportive or friendly with me or whatever, the more it got at the level of the women faculty. And it was a small group of women faculty who felt—I felt the antagonism very clearly. Very clearly.
- DONIN: How was it communicated to you?
- NAVARRO: Oh, you find out by other colleagues who tell you that in certain instances I was vetoed by women.
- DONIN: In faculty meetings—
- NAVARRO: No.
- DONIN: —or committees?
- NAVARRO: In committees, in a committee. In two committees in particular. On two instances. That's all.

And also part of the issue, I think that people realized that I was fearless.

DONIN: That's why you got things done.

NAVARRO: Yeah. But that is dangerous.

DONIN: Well, every movement, though, in the beginning, needs fearless people.

NAVARRO: I understand. But [chuckles] everybody—you know, most people—you have to be—in academia, I think we tend to create environments in which you reward the people who conform.

DONIN: Ah.

NAVARRO: Because, then, that means at least on certain issues, there is an acceptance and there is an assurance you can count on these persons for whatever, and I couldn't be restrained. I could not be counted on except on certain things. There's a colleague in the history department who said once, "the problem with Marysa is that she is too principled."

DONIN: But you must take that as a compliment.

NAVARRO: I take that as a compliment, but to him, that was a real problem, a real problem. That really was a very problematic thing because that means you can't be pushed around in [a] certain direction. You know what it means, that you can count on her to be on this issue there, but you cannot count [on] her to move out of these issues or in a different position on these issues.

DONIN: You don't compromise.

NAVARRO: No, I don't compromise.

DONIN: But doesn't every organization need somebody like you?

NAVARRO: I think so. And I'm not the only one, but I know that I have colleagues who looked at—in instances, in certain instances, they would look at me, saying, "Please don't do it." But I

would do it. And I said, “You don’t have to do it.” And I lived with these people, and I love some of these people, and I know that they’re not gonna be with me and I’m gonna be alone. But if you have to be alone, I think that that’s the way you have to be.

Also, I think I had another problem, which is that as far as I’m concerned, women didn’t have to be better than men; women had to be as bad as men. That is, they had to be exactly like the men. But I was not going to say that a woman was better than a man just because she was a woman. And there were men who were willing to do that, and I was not. That is, affirmative action became a very strange ball to be played with.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: And I didn’t play with it because I believe in it.

DONIN: Right. Well, and it’s come back to bite us, after all.

NAVARRO: Exactly, exactly. So what you do is you just—you do what is the right thing to do. I may be moralistic. I may be of an ethical standard which is too rigid, but that’s the only way I can be in order to survive in all the pitfalls that one finds all the time. And you have to make decisions. You have to make choices. And you have to know why you make the choices, and you don’t lie. And I think that’s problematic for some people.

DONIN: Is it more so, do you think, in an academic setting?

NAVARRO: It seems to me yes, that it is, because an academic setting—I think it’s a special place. You know, I hate that expression—you know, somebody who’s teaching, who’s in academia who says, “In the real world.” Damn it! I think that there’s nothing more real than academia, despite the fact that, according to some people, it isn’t real. It is. It doesn’t have—it’s true that people will kill each other for office space, but office space is important. You have to be there 20 out of 24 hours. You have to write there, you have to leave your stuff there, you have to be free and alone there, you—so it’s important. The hour you give your courses is important. All the things that—the little decisions.

I don't believe that the big business or the big enterprises are— all the time, everybody is concerned with the big decisions. No. If there's a little piece and there's somebody or a group that sees the entire thing, well, I deal with not the entire thing but one entire thing in one particular way and in a particular space. Let's put it this way.

So anyway, I feel that in that space, however, we talk about youth and the future and moral principles and ethics and the beauty of what we do and the importance of what we do. And I believe in all that. And the issue is that we don't live as if those things were true, we in academia. We don't live as— these things are only formulas that we repeat, but they have no validity. And I do what I do because that's the only thing I would do in life. If I had to do it again, I would do the same thing. I would teach at Dartmouth. I would spend my life fighting. I would love the students, and if I had them again, or similar to them, it would be--- I think that—because of that, I can say that, you know, I'm a happy person. I've been very lucky. Very, very, very lucky.

But then that means that I have to give some coherence to all that, and that has to do with the way you do certain things, the way you prepare classes, the way you lecture, the way you correct, the way you do research, the way you treat colleagues, et cetera, et cetera, and the way you vote. And when you vote for tenure or not for tenure, I always say I vote in secret because you vote for tenure on colleagues. You vote, and it's not to be known, and the information is not supposed to leave the room, but I vote with the reasons that I'm capable of giving the person outside, once I step out of the room. The reasons are valid to me, and if I vote against, I've got to be able to tell the person, "I voted against because of this and that." And it's horrible to say that, and I've done it once when I was confronted. But I said it. I said the truth, because ultimately what you do is when you get up in the morning and you're about to brush your teeth, you look at yourself in the mirror, and that's it. And you've got to look at yourself and to accept the face that is returned to you.

So if you don't do that, then you don't do your work properly. There's no coherence in your life. Like, I love what I do, and I told my students, all the ones who wanted to do it, "Go get a

Ph.D. Get a Ph.D.” My daughter has a Ph.D. My daughter teaches. She doesn’t teach history, unfortunately, but she teaches literature. But what is good for my students is good for my daughter. And I treat my students in a way as I treat my daughter. I’ve been the mother of them. I’m the godmother at least of one—of the child of one of my students.

DONIN: Wonderful.

NAVARRO: So there’s a coherence there. And if it doesn’t fit—I fit there, but if I don’t fit the big scheme, well, tough titties.

DONIN: [Laughs.] Okay. That’s a good place to stop because of your seminar.

NAVARRO: Okay. Oh, yes.

DONIN: Don’t you think?

NAVARRO: Perfect. All right. Thank you. Let’s turn this off.

[End Part 1. Begin Part 2.]

DONIN: All right, we’re back to Part 2 with Professor Marysa Navarro on Thursday, March 14th, 2013.

Okay, Professor, we’re gonna pick back up again here and sort of circle back to your early days, to talk a little bit about student life as opposed to academic life and committee life. So the unrest—the political life had exploded on campus in the end of the ’60s, and it culminated for President Dickey around the protests against the Vietnam War, and you were going to talk with us a little bit about the difficult time when the students took over Parkhurst Hall and actually physically carried out some of the people working there.

NAVARRO: Yes, like Dean Seymour—

DONIN: Thaddeus Seymour was taken out, and I don’t know who else. But they sort of—they were disrespectful, I think,

towards President Dickey. And they compelled—they forced everybody to leave their offices, yeah.

DONIN: The students did.

NAVARRO: The students did.

DONIN: Right.

NAVARRO: Well, the takeover—when was the takeover? The takeover was in May—

DONIN: May of 1969.

NAVARRO: Sixty-nine. It was a year after I arrived. I arrived in the spring of '68.

DONIN: Sixty-eight, yeah.

NAVARRO: In the spring of '68, right. It was the first year that I was teaching, that fall, and we still had the old calendar.

DONIN: Oh, yes, right.

NAVARRO: I had [chuckles]—that year, I was teaching a seminar, and I had in it the head of the Afro-Am, Wally Ford, Wallace Ford, a very tall, lanky boy, who was three times my size,—

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: —so to speak, with an Afro that made him four times my size. And that was in one seminar. And then I had a second class, which was Introduction to Latin American. That spring ended up in—I had, like, four or five students in jail.

DONIN: From that class.

NAVARRO: From that class, from my Latin America. So there were negotiations to give concessions or—the Afro-American students had made demands, one of them to create a program and a house, et cetera, et cetera. And they were having—in the fall, they were having negotiations with the administration and including—I'll never forget—a faculty meeting in which the students, the black students sat in front

of us in the faculty meeting. [Chuckles.] Wallace Ford, dressed in fatigues and smoking a cigar [laughs] was dictating the terms of the armistice. No, not really, but he spoke with the tone of a victor, as I say, dictating the terms of the armistice. And actually it was not exactly that way. But that was my introduction to one set of students.

And I had him in class, and he was so much involved in the politics of the creation of the Afro-American studies program and the demands as a whole, that he didn't do his work well and I didn't give him good grades, and he came to complain. And I said, "You got that grade because you did bad work." And he said, "I've never gotten a grade like that in my life." And I said, "Too bad. This is the beginning of it." [Laughs.] And he went—he got very angry. But I've seen him since, because we became friends as well. [Chuckles.] And actually, he has a blog which he sends me now.

DONIN: Oh, wonderful.

NAVARRO: Yes, he's a lawyer. And I wrote him a recommendation to go to Harvard Law School, which he did. He came. Anyway. And he's a good father, and he's a good man.

In any case—

DONIN: Were you surprised by the level of political activity that you found on campus?

NAVARRO: Yes. Well, except that I had spent a year in Brazil on a fellowship, and I came to the United—I came to Dartmouth—I was hired at Dartmouth. I was hired at Dartmouth, and I got a Social Science Research Council fellowship for a year in Brazil. So I called Lou Morton, and I said, "I've got this, and I really want to go." He says, "Go, and when you finish, you come back, and you'll begin your job then."

So I was able to do the two things. I got back into the country, and I think the day I landed in the United States, *The New York Times* had a picture of the students taking over Cornell, that famous picture of the student looking like Emiliano Zapata with a bandolier and holding—*Ai, my God!* I said, *What has happened in the months I've been away?* I mean, in Brazil there had been a coup, a military coup while I

was there. And, my God, I come back to the United States and I see this picture on the front page of *The New York Times*. So this was my welcome back.

DONIN: Wow.

NAVARRO: And then at Dartmouth I got thrown into the classroom, and these people were very much involved in things that I thought were right. And then there was the Vietnam War.

DONIN: Yeah, yeah.

NAVARRO: And there was a great deal of activity, and were meetings of the SDS, and I went to listen to them because I remember reading about the SDS before going to Brazil but I had been away for a long time.

So anyway—and then I realized that there was something romantic about Latin America, and I had come back from Latin America, and I had all these—I had a large class. And then we had faculty meetings, and I went to the faculty meetings. That's when I realized [chuckles] what an odd person I was, when there were no women there.

And I remember that there was a vote, which was a sort of an important vote, which was about—and I remember that President Dickey chaired the meeting, and it was in Dartmouth Hall, in the old Dartmouth Hall, when it wasn't arranged, and it was like a theater. He was really very angry and very distraught, and it was about whether or not ROTC was going to stay on campus. It was the vote on ROTC, and I voted against ROTC on campus.

And all the members of my department, by the way, except for two, who shall remain nameless—but all the young people voted together, so I felt very comfortable. And Lou Morton, the head of the department, who was a military historian looking at us from the balcony—and so we said [laughs] goodbye.

DONIN: Oh, you waved at him.

NAVARRO: We waved at him! [Laughs.] But anyway, it was very serious. I'm laughing now, but it was very serious. And, my God, my first vote here, and here I go. That was my baptism.

DONIN: Wow.

NAVARRO: In a faculty meeting, with whether or not to vote against ROTC. But I was against the Vietnam War. I wanted it to end, and I wanted peace. So that was it.

And then the students took over—When the students took over Parkhurst, in the afternoon, somebody comes to my office and says, “The office is taken. The office of the president has been taken by the students.” And there was one student of mine whom I knew was going to be there because for the last week or so, he had been carrying a big knapsack, and I said, *This one is getting ready to take over whatever it is he's going to take over, and he's going to camp out there.* I knew it!

And we went, with Garthwaite, with Leo Spitzer, with my *compadre*. My *compadre* was another Latino in the Spanish department, Arturo Madrid. And he's my *compadre* because he and his wife, Robin, adopted a little girl, and they called her Marysa.

DONIN: Ohh!

NAVARRO: I'm the godmother. So we all went to Parkhurst, and we went there just to see and see if the police were going to come or whatever. And it was a horrible sight because everybody was very angry.

DONIN: Inside or outside?

NAVARRO: Outside. There were a group of students who were against those who went inside, and they were removed by the time we went, but they were across the Green, chanting and saying horrible things, sort of wall-to-wall, one helmet. I found it very upsetting because it was a community that was divided and because students were pitted against students and because I didn't know what was gonna happen. We never knew what was gonna happen. And so—

DONIN: Dickey called the National Guard.

NAVARRO: And he called the National Guard.

DONIN: Well, the governor, I guess, called the National Guard.

NAVARRO: Yes. No, he—I think that it was a serious disturbance, and I think that that's when Dickey got in touch with the governor, and the governor called the National Guard.

So I ran home, and I checked where my daughter was, and she stayed with a baby sitter, and I got back. And I spent from seven o'clock until I think it was one o'clock, two o'clock that the National Guard came.

DONIN: In the morning, yes.

NAVARRO: That's when—I stayed there with my colleagues because we did not want to be—we wanted to see what was gonna happen to the students.

DONIN: Were you able to communicate with the students in the building?

NAVARRO: No. They came to the window sometimes, and there was one who ended up—who died shortly after, of an overdose.

DONIN: Oh!

NAVARRO: Yeah. A young man. He was also in my class. He was in there, and I saw him. On top of Parkhurst there was a flag with the face of Che Guevara. There were lots of faculty members who were doing the same thing that I was doing with my colleagues. I did not know other members, except for age. And, well, your people in Hanover came. But that was it.

And I thought—there was very—I remember I was anguished that whole night. I get upset about those things. And then when the police came or the National Guard came and they were—I don't think they were treated badly, but they were pushed around because they also resisted, so therefore they were put in buses and left. And then everything was quite, and we all went home.

But then, after that, there was—what was gonna happen to them? And they were put in jail. So I got a message that they wanted—one of the students—oh, remember the people in Pilobolus?

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: Well, there were two of them: Moses—

DONIN: Yeah, Pendleton.

NAVARRO: Pendleton was in jail and in the same jail—because they put them in different jails.

DONIN: They spread them around.

NAVARRO: Yes. And I got a message from one of my students that they wanted to know if I was teaching, what were the readings that I was giving? So I spent the spring—you can ask my daughter—I had a red Volkswagen, and we spent the spring, every weekend, running the roads of New Hampshire, which I did not know because I had just moved there, looking for the jails and taking the homework to my students—

DONIN: Ohh!

NAVARRO: —so that they would do their homework because they wanted to do it, and that's what—I remember going into one jail. I don't even—it was Cunningham—it ends with an "m"—Cunningham. I don't know which one it was, in what town. I remember going into that place where there was a building and a sort of a compound around with, you know, not barbed wire but wire mesh. And Moses [chuckles] was dancing—

DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: I remember—because he was—I had gone to see him to do his final, his class, and their final exam was a dance, and I had gone to see him, and I knew him. I don't know where I knew him from. He was not my student, but I knew him. I remember seeing him dancing in the open air. It was wonderful!

DONIN: How bizarre! Really, in jail!

NAVARRO: In jail. But it was in bucolic New Hampshire, the mountains, the sun. It was a lovely day, and he was dancing. And he was [chuckles] in jail. In any case. It was a weekend. So that's what I did.

And then came the moment of—then they came back. They were there for 30 days, I think, or there were 30 of them jailed for 40 days or 40 of them jailed for 30 days. I can't remember. But that, I know those were the figures. And so in the summer, they were tried.

DONIN: Yes, over the summer.

NAVARRO: Over the summer. And I still don't remember the name of the white-haired, bushy-hair lawyer of the Chicago Eight [sic, Seven; William Kunstler], the Chicago guys at the time of the convention,—

DONIN: Yep, yep.

NAVARRO: —of the Democratic convention. It's with an S-h and an n somewhere. I'm absolutely sure.

Anyway, so I said that I would not—I defended only two. One was not my student, really, but he was a freshman. He was a freshman, and nobody was ready to defend him, and he didn't have a defender. And so—and I don't know how I got hooked with him. He came to see me, I think, and he told me that he didn't have a lawyer. We were not lawyers but we were faculty members, and he asked me if I would do it, and I said, "All right, I'll do it. You don't have anybody." He didn't have any professor he could ask. So therefore I said I would do it. Robert, his first name was.

And I said that I would do it, and I said, "Who are you? Why did you do what you did? Why did you go in?" And he told me that in the months before, he had been very upset about the war, that he felt very guilty that there were all sorts of people dying, U.S. people, and Americans were dying and that we were killing a lot of Vietnamese. He just felt very, very guilty not to be there and guilty because he was alive and the other ones weren't—that was his argument to me.

And he was a sweet young boy. And so I said, "So what did you do yesterday?" And he told me he had been there, in front of Parkhurst until something like 12 o'clock, and then at 12, because nothing was happening, he went in. And so I said, "All right, I'll defend you." So I told this story, that he, on ethical grounds, on moral grounds he felt guilty, and I understood that perfectly, but I don't know what—I remember the argument. That's all. I don't remember my words. He was suspended for one term. And that was okay.

And then there was another one that I defended, who was my student. He was suspended for two terms, and that was it. And then when he came back, he drove me one day out of my mind because I had gone to a party and I came back, and he was waiting for me in my house, on the steps. He said, "I don't think that I'm gonna graduate." And I said, "What do you mean?" And it was the middle of the night! And he says, "No, I think it's immoral to graduate." And I said, "Well, it's immoral to do that to your mother." His parents were divorced. His mother had made sacrifices for him to be at Dartmouth. "And you owe it to her. I don't care. You owe it to her," I said.

"Yes, but don't I owe it to me?" And I said, "No, in this instance you owe it to her." And so that was my argument to him, and we discussed this, and he had done his work. He was one of the ones I had taken the work to. And he graduated. And that was, like, the week before graduation that he did that to me.

DONIN: Uh!

NAVARRO: [Laughs.] But those were Dartmouth students.

DONIN: Well, they felt strongly about the war.

NAVARRO: Yes, yes.

DONIN: They weren't alone.

NAVARRO: No. No, no. And that was a very upsetting period because of the dissention inside, because of the bad—the attacks that were on absolutely nonsensical reason and because—no,

the reasons were not nonsensical. No. The attacks were about nonsense because the anger was very profound and serious, and there was no way to get out of these kind of very tight-knit, hateful situations that had been created until the war ended.

DONIN: Yeah.

NAVARRO: And then again, it took a long time.

DONIN: Well, John Kemeny was dealing with it when he took office.

NAVARRO: Yeah. Oh, yes.

DONIN: Didn't he call a week's moratorium to talk about the war?

NAVARRO: He did. He did, indeed. He had to. And Cambodia. That was the beginning of the war, and he got really pummeled by the alums because, again, people disagreed about that, and it was a very hot disagreement and the issues were very serious. And there was no way to reconcile until the war came to an end.

But there was—at the same time, I think that in a way that helped me to get into Dartmouth—

DONIN: I'll say.

NAVARRO: —and to identify, because it was the kind of thing, the kind of thing that if you could not be—there were people who didn't seem to care, but I was surrounded in the department by people who cared very much. There was David Roberts, who's an English historian, who had been a conscientious objector in the Second World War and who had organized the McGovern campaign in New Hampshire and who was a wonderful friend. You felt—I felt, as a newcomer and an untenured faculty member, that there was support—these people—we were all in the same boat and in agreement, and it was good to be with friends like that.

DONIN: Well, when you have people who think alike and are passionate about an issue as important as that,—

NAVARRO: As important as that.

DONIN: —that’s a great bonding—

NAVARRO: Yeah, yeah. It was, it was.

DONIN: —experience for someone who’s new.

NAVARRO: That was, I think, a very important element in my feeling better about the place or feeling that I could be myself, regardless, so that was very important. And then there were all sorts of activities going—[chuckles]—picketing the Cold Region area there, where they have the research—what is it?

DONIN: CRREL.

NAVARRO: CRREL.

DONIN: Yes, the CRREL.

NAVARRO: And the funny thing about that is that—

DONIN: Why were they picketing the Cold Regions labs?

NAVARRO: Because it was military.

DONIN: Oh, of course.

NAVARRO: Military research. And we were pretending we were Michigan and the big [chuckles] universities, which had incredible amounts of money from the federal government, because it was, again, a symbolic place. And I remember we went to picket CRREL, and the police came, and I remember—I felt very conscious of the fact that I was not a citizen then.

DONIN: Oh, yes.

NAVARRO: And I didn’t want to get caught by the police because I had a green card and I could lose the green card. So when the police came, I started running, and ran and ran and ran. The one who ran after me was the chief of police, whose daughter was a friend of my daughter, and they went to school together. [Laughs.] And he knew me, and I knew him

because he either came to drop his daughter or I dropped mine at his house. But those are the things in a place like Hanover.

DONIN: Small town.

NAVARRO: A small town. But he was doing his job and I was doing mine. And, again, there were all sorts of things. There was a place where the young men went to register, and they took them to somewhere else, to Concord or whatever. And we had to go to Lebanon. And there was a bus. There were people lying down in front of the bus. I couldn't, but I would accompany them in order to let them—because, again, I was not going to be caught by the police doing that, but I was standing nicely, like a responsible citizen. [Both chuckle.]

Anyway, so I think that those were the things that made bonding easy, bonding easy with the students also.

DONIN: Absolutely.

NAVARRO: Yeah.

DONIN: I assume those topics came up in the classroom.

NAVARRO: Well, I was very bad about that because I did not allow discussion of that in the classroom. The classroom was for what I was supposed to do and they were supposed to do. If they wanted to connect it, fine, but I steered—if there was a conversation or there was a discussion on the topics that needed to be discussed, and that was it. I just saw that as my responsibility. And there were some people who canceled classes to do discussion. I never did.

DONIN: Well, they saw you when you were not in the classroom, supporting those efforts.

NAVARRO: Oh, yeah, I was there.

DONIN: So—

NAVARRO: So therefore—yeah. And also there was a time—there was a great deal of contact with students because that was a period in which they stopped going into Thayer. And one of

the places that opened at that moment was in Collis. No. Oh, the building that is in front of Reed Hall.

DONIN: The building in front of Reed Hall?

NAVARRO: Where the students—well, where the theaters are.

DONIN: Oh, the Hopkins Center.

NAVARRO: The Hopkins Center.

DONIN: Oh, yes. Right.

NAVARRO: Yes, the Hopkins Center had a cafeteria, so therefore we would go and eat at the cafeteria, and the students would come and sit with us.

DONIN: Perfect.

NAVARRO: And I think that made an enormous amount of difference in terms of interaction with students.

DONIN: Right, right.

NAVARRO: This doesn't happen anymore. Well, I don't go to—in the last years, I never went to the Hopkins Center to eat like that, and I don't know if the students go. They probably go.

DONIN: I don't know if they go with professors.

NAVARRO: But we did, the faculty. And we would go there to have a cup of coffee, which was the only—there was no Dirt Cowboy Café, no nothing. So that was the only place where you could have a cup of coffee.

We had something else also in the history department, which was in Reed Hall, my most favorite place in the world.

DONIN: Reed Hall?

NAVARRO: Mmm.

DONIN: [Chuckles.]

- NAVARRO: I hate—I don't like Carson Hall, at all.
- DONIN: Has the history department moved to Carson? Uh-oh.
- NAVARRO: Uh-oh, yes, a long time ago.
- DONIN: [Chuckles.]
- NAVARRO: Reed Hall belonged to us and to Classics at that time, and it was lovely. I had a great office, great office, corner office. I could see—it was wonderful because every time I wanted to speak with Leonard Rieser, I would see him come out—I would call Barbara—Barbara—what's her name? Barbara—she changed names twice. Barbara—his assistant—
- DONIN: Yes, was it Gerstner?
- NAVARRO: Gerstner, Gerstner. I would call Barbara and say, "Barbara, is he about to go? Is he there?" And she would say, "Yes, he's still here." And, "I'll call you back," I would say. Then I would call back and say, "Is he about to go?" She said, "Yes, he's going down the stairs."
- DONIN: Perfect. [Chuckles.]
- NAVARRO: He always wore sneakers, and we used to call him—because the students called him—Gerry Johnson called him the Silver Fox.
- DONIN: [Laughs.]
- NAVARRO: So I would see the Silver Fox leave Wentworth on his way to Parkhurst, and before he could cross—before he would get to the first street before going to—
- DONIN: Across the Green.
- NAVARRO: —before Rauner, across the Green, I would call, "Leonard!" And he would come back, and I would deal with him, whatever it is that I had to do.
- DONIN: [Laughs.]

NAVARRO: Ahhh! And off he went. My corner office was perfect. We became—I became very good friends with Leonard and Rosemary. Tim Rieser—have you met him?

DONIN: No.

NAVARRO: He's the son. And he's a jewel. He is. He took classes from me. I think the second day I was in my office, he showed up, and I did not know who he was, and I had no idea who was Leonard Rieser, but we bonded. Tim and I bonded that day because he loved Mexico, et cetera, et cetera. So anyway, I had him in class, although he was not gonna be a Latin American—he was not gonna be a historian. I think he had three classes with me. One of them was a seminar with Susan Braden, where I gave a tutorial to the two of them.

Anyway—and when he graduated, he wanted to be a lawyer, and there was difficulty in the household, because of the kind of law he wanted to do, and I supported him. And Rosemary and Leonard were wonderful to me. They were very supportive, although I had one *bad* encounter with Leonard. But then the following week it was fine. And I was very sad when they both—when they died.

DONIN: Yes, very sad.

NAVARRO: And I was, in a way, happy and relieved when Rosemary died because of her Alzheimer's, which was very hard on all the people who loved her, particularly her children.

DONIN: So staying on the student side of the Green, so to speak—

NAVARRO: Yes.

DONIN: —I think the one topic we haven't touched on is your involvement and thoughts about how student life at Dartmouth is impacted by the existence of the Greek system.

NAVARRO: All right. The Greek system—in those first years at Dartmouth, there were dances sometimes in the Greek system, in certain—

DONIN: In fraternities.

- NAVARRO: And the students invited faculty to ‘tails.
- DONIN: Oh, tails. Yes, I’ve heard about ‘tails.
- NAVARRO: Well, I went to many a tail, many, many, many a tail. And because they would invite us, a group in the history department—students. Tended to be in two or three fraternities. And so we would go there. So I knew—I felt always nervous going to the fraternities.
- DONIN: Even then?
- NAVARRO: Yeah, because I knew that they had a secret life, and I always thought, *What on earth are these people doing when we’re not here?* Because when we were there, they got dressed up—
- DONIN: Coats and ties?
- NAVARRO: Coats and ties, and we got dressed up. You know, everything was fine, and they were gentlemen, and they treated us very properly. And then you knew that they had debauched hours after we left. And I didn’t like that.
- DONIN: But there were no women on campus at that point.
- NAVARRO: Oh, yes, but they did come. Those were the weekends they did come.
- DONIN: Oh, the weekends, when the—
- NAVARRO: Yes! That’s when the ‘tails were.
- DONIN: I see.
- NAVARRO: So there were some meetings sometimes having to do with the war or Vietnam or whatever, and then that was different. You went there because they invited you and there were conversations, and that was okay. And then I think after the women came and when the quota existed, I think that’s when things got worse than they had ever been, if they had been bad, and they had been bad.

And, by the way, I had my image of the— Since I didn't go to college in the United States, I only knew about *Tea and Sympathy*, a movie with Deborah Kerr.

DONIN: [Chuckles.]

NAVARRO: And then there was a hidden life which, you know, everybody rumored—you heard rumors about that. In any case, then the rumors became, you know, louder and louder and louder, and then when the women came at the time of the quota system, then the girls began to tell me things: that it's impossible to go to this one, that you cannot go alone, that you have to—and “I'm not going, and I don't live on campus.” I mean, you began to hear all sorts of things.

And then there were incidents. And when there were incidents, then, you know, they came and asked me, and I said, you know, “As long as you have”—first of all, I think that they're wrong that women cannot be there. It's wrong, and they don't fit the college as it is, so they cannot exist.

DONIN: They had no safe social space.

NAVARRO: But I understood, and I was on a committee which had Andres—Bill Andres was the chair of the board of trustees when they went co-ed. And there was a committee, a blue ribbon committee to change the fraternities, and there was no way to do anything. And I sat for a year and went and complained and there's nothing that was going to happen. They were not willing to consider that there was something wrong and that, in part, what was wrong had to do with the fact that the institution had no social alternative, that the town does not offer social alternatives, and that the fraternities have become the escape hatch.

DONIN: You also had a dean of the college at that point who did not support coeducation.

NAVARRO: That was slightly before that, the Little Boy Blue, what he was called, the Yalie. What was his name?

DONIN: Carroll Brewster.

NAVARRO: Carroll Brewster. Carroll Brewster was awful.

DONIN: And he was there just as those first early classes of women were coming to campus.

NAVARRO: Yeah, yeah, yeah. He was and I was at the songs in front of Dartmouth Hall.

DONIN: The Hums.

NAVARRO: The Hums, where the horrible songs were sang.

DONIN: Yes.

NAVARRO: And he was there. And he should have said something, but there was no way he was going to say—because he agreed, he was part of it. See, that's the other thing. And how he could go and then become president of a women's college is beyond the pale. But nevertheless, that's their problem, not ours.

But it's wrong that he did that, and it's wrong that he didn't do anything at The Hums. And so I—I got sick and tired of every time there was an incident, and the *D* came and asked—well, I will make another statement on the stupidity of the—and the irrationality, the kind of nurturing bad behavior and putting the responsibility on Dartmouth as well. I'm sorry, but I believe that. And that the only way that these would be transformed would be if they were abolished.

And, of course, I lost the battle because what Dartmouth proceeded to do is to create sororities. And the sororities are like the counterpart of the fraternities, and the world is not divided into those two categories the way they are arranged socially there. And it's stupid. It's absolutely stupid to do that.

DONIN: It's all so unnatural.

NAVARRO: Totally. So that's one of the things that I think—I think that in terms of the coeducation process, acting as if nothing had changed was bad. The naming of Ruth Adams was bad. And the maintaining of fraternities and compounding the sin with a bigger one, which is the creating of sororities.

- DONIN: Well, they're still struggling with the same questions of how to create safe social spaces.
- NAVARRO: I think that they did—they tried to create a Collis, and Collis was supposed to be *the* social place, but it isn't—it's too connected to the college. I think that maybe it would work if there was something in the town which was separate from the college...or you shut the college for a few years and then start all over again. There is no memory of the fraternities, because the memory then goes to, you know—it's continuous, and it gets fueled, and there's no let-down, there's no separation. I don't know how you fix it except create an alternative social space which is not in the college. And I don't think that necessarily works. But places like Amherst—
- DONIN: And Williams?
- NAVARRO: And Williams. It's been done.
- DONIN: Do you think, with the increasing diversity of the students who are now there, compared to, say, in 1970 and '80—you know, there are now equal numbers of women and men, there are students that come from very different backgrounds—
- NAVARRO: Yes.
- DONIN: —who are attending there now, who were not there in the '70s and the '80s—
- NAVARRO: And whose grandfathers did not go to Dartmouth.
- DONIN: Exactly. Is there any chance that their lack of interest in the Greek life is going to eventually be able to water down this obsession with carrying on the fraternities?
- NAVARRO: I don't know, because I would need to know if there has been a diminution of people joining or not. The idea that people—the way you define them, who have no traditional connection with Greek life, et cetera—in theory, that should help.
- DONIN: It would take a long time.

- NAVARRO: In theory, that should help, but I don't know if, in fact, that has already begun because in terms of student body, the ethnic composition, cultural composition of the student body, it's very different from [what] it was 20 years ago, already.
- DONIN: Absolutely. And that's a good thing.
- NAVARRO: That's a good thing.
- DONIN: On every level.
- NAVARRO: Exactly, exactly.
- DONIN: One could hope that it might water down the influence of the Greek system, but—
- NAVARRO: I don't know. But it would be a good possibility or one good factor towards it, to change it.
- DONIN: Mm-hm. Well, it'll be interesting to see the numbers in terms of who now is affiliated with the Greek life and who is not, among the student body—
- NAVARRO: Yeah.
- DONIN: —to see if it's the same level of interest.
- NAVARRO: Yeah. I don't know. You haven't heard a thing, no?
- DONIN: I haven't really asked.
- NAVARRO: But I heard that this year already there was an incident.
- DONIN: I'm sure there are many incidents.
- NAVARRO: Because I get the—whenever there is something, I get it through an e-mail. I'm still in the system, so—
- DONIN: Yes, exactly.
- Well, Professor—
- NAVARRO: Well, that's it.

DONIN: For now.

NAVARRO: For now! [Laughs.]

DONIN: We'll always think of more to talk about.

NAVARRO: Is there anything more? No, there isn't.

DONIN: Well, there's plenty more. But I think today is enough for your voice.

NAVARRO: Okay, okay. I'm fine. I'm fine with it finished today. [Laughs.]

DONIN: We're finished for today. Okay.

NAVARRO: Very good.

[End of interview.]