

Dartmouth College Oral History Project
The War Years at Dartmouth
Interview with Quentin L. Kopp '49
By Mary Stelle Donin
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DONIN: How is it you ended up coming to Dartmouth?

KOPP: My father, Sheppard S. Kopp, grandfather of Sheppard S. Kopp II, member of the class of 1986, was born in 1897 in a village in what is now Belarus. And he immigrated in 1912 to the United States, settling in Brooklyn with an older brother who had preceded him; and by 1917 had graduated from the Brooklyn College of Pharmacy. World War I for the United States began on or about April 6th of 1917. He enlisted within a month of that after his degree was received. In that era, pharmacy school was two years. And he eventually served in France with the American Expeditionary Force. And he was an enlisted man, a private, a private first class, then was promoted to corporal. But in his unit was a group of Princeton graduates. And that group influenced him later. By the time I was in high school in Syracuse, New York, in 1944, my father's ambition was that I attend Princeton University. But he had two customers in his drugstore, good customers, who were Dartmouth graduates. One was Bill Morton, who must have been the class of 1929, who was a banker. He was vice president and then president of Onondaga County Savings Bank. And the other was Gardner Spring, who was a later class, sometime in the early thirties. And I applied to Princeton, and I applied to Dartmouth. And the fallback always in that era was Syracuse University, because the notion historically had been with Syracuse University for high school graduates is that you could save money because you could live at home. And I was accepted at Syracuse. I was not accepted at Princeton. To Bill Morton's utter surprise, I wasn't accepted at Dartmouth. He was surprised because there were few high school graduates in Syracuse who attended Dartmouth. But the few that did were recommended by him and were accepted inevitably. And my first year, or year and a half in high school, was spent in profligate courses like printing, until I was yanked unceremoniously one day by the principal, on impetus from my parents, and sent to a physics class, literally, from printing into a physics class. But I rallied during the end but not enough to wind up with a high grade point average. It was probably about 87 or 88 at best, maybe 86.

And that was—and I graduated in January of 1945 because I'd started kindergarten at four. My father simply represented, incorrectly, that I was five and never produced a birth certificate. So I had a year's jump which had a plus and a minus element to it. And then I had skipped in the fourth or fifth grade, one semester. So I was really a year and a half ahead of my time, and graduated in January. The applications had to be in, I think, by October first or something like that. Anyway, I was rejected. So what to do? Well, I would reapply. But in the meantime I went to work in a defense plant which was about a mile and a half from my house. The company was called Prosperity Co., Incorporated. And it made dry cleaning presses before the war. But it had been converted into a factory which made airplane parts. I was 16 and a half. And under New York State law you needed a work permit to work at 16. And I was interviewed by the former high school football coach at Christian Brothers Academy, who was kind of a venerated figure to me, although he was probably in his forties and was ineligible for the draft as a result of age. And I was hired as a stock boy which meant bringing parts from the storage areas to the assembly line for some part of an aircraft to be manufactured. And at the same time, I enrolled in the Syracuse University extension school, night school, which was not on the campus but was in a separate building not far away, near downtown Syracuse. And took an English course where I was introduced to S.I. Hayakawa and Stuart Chase, language in action, and a Spanish course, because my foreign language had been Spanish. I only had three semesters of it, but I was able to pass the New York State Regents Examination in Spanish even without a full two years. And I thought I would add. So I took English and Spanish. And my memory is that I got either two As or an A and a B, which was encouraging. And reapplied to Dartmouth and was accepted in April.

DONIN: Great.

KOPP: And so I matriculated in early July because the first part of our class matriculated in March, second in July, and the third in November.

DONIN: From the show of hands yesterday, the biggest group was the group—

KOPP: Was in July.

DONIN: Yes. The last class to be matriculated by Ernest Martin Hopkins.

KOPP: That's right. And with Robert Strong as—

DONIN: Dean of admissions.

KOPP: Dean of admissions, yes. A fine gentleman. And the admissions certificate was signed by Robert Strong, I think. But there was another document signed by Ernest Martin Hopkins. In any event, I had never seen Dartmouth. And my matriculation was in large part the result of Bill Morton. Not so much Gardner Spring because he didn't have that kind of influence with the college and wasn't as vigorous in his adulation of the college. But Bill Morton was, and Bill Morton's son, whom I knew as a little boy, I haven't seen him since, was a member of a later class; I think the class of 1956. He had his nickname as Moose, although the last time I saw Bill Morton was on campus watching a freshman football game, and he was here to watch his grandson. His grandson? Yes, his grandson, Moose's son. Whom I think had a first name of Andrew. Anyway, Bill Morton was Dartmouth to me. And every time I'd come home on vacation, I would go downtown and no matter what the day was, Bill Morton would always talk Dartmouth.

DONIN: Oh.

KOPP: So I had to report.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: And I was the only one then from Syracuse attending Dartmouth. Syracuse then was a city of over 210,000. It later went up as high as 250,000 before it collapsed. And my impressions, of course, were fresh. I had an aunt and uncle, my father's older sister, brother-in-law, who had lived in Boston, actually in Dorchester. So I took a train to Boston and stayed overnight. And then they put me on the Boston & Maine Railroad to White River Junction. And I've forgotten the mode of transportation to Hanover. It may have been a bus, may have been a taxicab. And it was a new world. I thought Syracuse was a large city. And Hanover looked like a hick town. And the major part of the student population consisted of Marine V-8, V-12—not Marine, Navy V-8, V-12, and the Marine program, which I think was a V-8 program. I can't recall. And we wore beanies, freshman beanies.

DONIN: And you were so young.

- KOPP: I was 16. And I would turn 17 August 11th of that year.
- DONIN: Uh-huh.
- KOPP: Right about the time of VJ-Day. VJ-Day was actually the next day, I think, August 12th.
- DONIN: Wow.
- KOPP: But I was assigned to Wheeler Hall. I made a mistake in my view, that I asked for a single room. I should have asked for a double. But I was probably—I probably did it because I was a little afraid. So I was assigned to Wheeler, and I think it was the second floor, maybe it was—yes, I think it was. People I remember who were next door close by were John Adler, Jay Haft who's now dead, and at the end of the hall, Gene Miller, Bob Weber, a fellow from Oregon, Ron Honeyman, whom I've never heard of since in terms of Dartmouth. I think there was a '48 on the floor. Lew Geer may have been on that floor. Anyway, that was freshman summer. And as I said yesterday, one of the aspects was of course, "Forty-nine Out!" Whenever that would be hollered, you'd come out in your pajamas or whatever you slept in and be marched down to Occom Pond for no good reason. Around the pond and then back to Wheeler.
- DONIN: Any time of the day or night that they did this.
- KOPP: Well, they would be at night because in the day we wouldn't all be in our rooms.
- DONIN: Yes, you're right.
- KOPP: So it was done at night because there was nothing to do at night certainly during the week, except study. And it was usually done after ten, I think the library closed, about ten o'clock.
- DONIN: And were the upperclassmen also getting you to do chores for them and carry furniture and that kind of stuff?
- KOPP: Yes. When we arrived, before classes began, we were ordered by some sophomores to move furniture. I moved furniture. Not much, not every day. But maybe for an hour or two or something of that sort. And there was kind of an air of hazing, although there wasn't

much hazing. I'd come from a high school with high school fraternities, in which pledges were paddled with wooden paddles.

DONIN: Ooof.

KOPP: And in fact, I later joined a fraternity, which doesn't exist now, Pi Lambda Phi, which is an all Jewish fraternity, almost entirely. But you made a paddle for that. By that time, 1947 or so, maybe it was used once in a great while. But it had started to disappear because World War II veterans who pledged fraternities would not tolerate a paddle. There was some story, maybe apocryphal, of some pledge, World War II, veteran, simply seizing the paddle and turning it on the fraternity brother.

DONIN: Yes. [Laughter] Was it intimidating for you? I mean a young, you know, 16-, 17-year-old kid arriving here and having the campus dominated by these older, mature, war-weary veterans?

KOPP: Well, that summer there wasn't much in the way of civilian upperclassmen. It was all Navy and Marine Corps. And there wasn't much intercourse.

DONIN: You didn't see them?

KOPP: Now, there was some with the civilians, and I wanted to write. I had written some sports in high school. So I've forgotten the name of the newspaper. It wasn't the Daily Dartmouth. The Daily Dartmouth wasn't revived 'til the following spring.

DONIN: It was called the *Dartmouth Log*.

KOPP: *Dartmouth Log*. That is what it was.

DONIN: I think it was weekly, wasn't it?

KOPP: Yes. Maybe three times a week. Maybe it was weekly. So I wrote for that. There was a 1948 who was in charge of writing sports. His first name was Mark, and I am tempted to say his last name was Strauss. But in any event. So I did some of that. And took the full load of courses. And the courses were difficult because I had been raising my grades in the last year of high school and then those two courses at SU extension. And I struggled, I struggled. And I wasn't disciplined. And I was on a pre-medicine course because of parental insistence. My father, an immigrant boy who became a

pharmacist, wanted me—and so did my mother—to be a medical doctor. And she was native born in 1900 in Binghamton, New York, which is about 75 miles south of Syracuse. But there were three girls in her family and two boys. The boys were the youngest, and they had both become medical doctors. But anyway, that was my path. So I had to take not only general chemistry, but then I had to keep taking chemistry courses and physics. And I finally developed—I took a year of general chemistry, and I took a semester of quantitative analysis, a semester of qualitative analysis. And then a semester I was already in my third year or the end of the second year, and I took the first semester of organic chemistry. And I adapted and was able even to pull an A in I think quantitative analysis. And I was no worse than a B in organic chemistry.

DONIN: Wow!

KOPP: But I also had to take botany, zoology. Then comparative anatomy, and I got a D in comparative anatomy. And I had to take physics. And I had to take not just the first year course of physics but then the ensuing course, and I got another D. So anyway, to button up that part of the story, finally in my junior year I convinced my parents that I would never be a doctor. And that I could major in government. And my grades shot up accordingly and that junior year I was a Rufus Choate Scholar, which meant a 3.6 or better. And I would have done it again the senior year but for Tuck School. [Laughs]

DONIN: Was it Donald Morrison who urged you to go to Tuck?

KOPP: No. My father. My father had an idea. In that era you could apply for and be accepted in all the law schools after only three years of college.

DONIN: Oh.

KOPP: The only one that wouldn't allow that was Harvard. But it did allow it for Harvard College students. They could get into HLS after three years. So I applied to Stanford, to Columbia, to UVA—University of Virginia. And I was accepted at the University of Virginia Law School. And would have gone probably but Donald Morrison, who was a relatively new professor in government, post-World War II, came from West Virginia, had a Ph.D. from Princeton, took an interest in me personally. And said, don't go to University of Virginia

Law School; it's for rich kids, as in ne'er-do-wells who otherwise wouldn't be able to graduate from law school. And the best example of that was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jr., God rest his soul. [Laughter] So I turned that down, and Columbia indicated that I wouldn't be accepted or didn't accept me, but indicated I'd be accepted for sure after I graduated. I spent that summer of 1948 in Los Angeles because my father's older brother had emigrated from Syracuse in the middle of the Depression because of economic conditions in Syracuse, and gone to Los Angeles to go into managing theaters because his wife was related to the Schencks, Joseph and Nicholas, who founded Twentieth-Century Fox.

DONIN: Oh, my!

KOPP: So California was nirvana in a way. And I spent the summer working on a construction job and was able to get my classmate Lou Harris, who grew up in Beverly Hills, a job in the same construction project. And I largely hitchhiked home from Chicago with a member of the class of 1950, Al Parsons who came from Painted Post, New York, outside of Elmira. I think his father was an executive with Ingersoll-Rand which had a plant there. And when I got home, there was an acceptance from Stanford.

DONIN: Oh, wow!

KOPP: The dean of Stanford then was Grant—not Grant; Grant's his son—Carl Spaeth, who was the class of 1929 or so.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: So if you were from Dartmouth, you probably had an edge at Stanford Law School. And that was attractive, but it was a long way to turn around and go back to California. And my father said, "You go to Tuck School, and you get a degree from business school. Then you go to law school and get a degree from law school. And the whole world will be yours," So I went to Tuck School for my last year. It destroyed my Rufus Choate status, and did not like Tuck School. I was happy to end the year.

DONIN: Was it the classes you didn't like?

KOPP: I didn't like the subject matter. I didn't like the classes. The only outstanding grade I received was an A in marketing because of a term paper I wrote on the ice cream industry of all things. Because

my closest friend's, the class of 1950, father owned part of an ice cream company. So I used him as a source to start and end whatever research you needed to do, I did. But to go back to the summer of 1945, the hazing was one aspect of life. I was startled to some extent by the diversity of geography—of people in the class from all different states. Fuzzy Reed, who later became a medical doctor, came from West Virginia. And I remember Paul Daukas, because we had two forms of spelling Daukas. One was D-O-U-K-A-S, but Paul and his brother, John, who are both alive, spelled it D-A-U-K-A-S. And they had an older brother; they had two older brothers who had played football, one at Dartmouth, one at Cornell. But Paul Daukas had an accent, the New England accent. And when I said, "Where are you from?" I thought he said Nashville as in Tennessee. He was saying Nashua. I had never heard of Nashua, New Hampshire. [Laughs] I didn't know it existed. And he had to say it about three times before I understood what he was saying.

DONIN: So what was your social group made up of? Was it people writing for *The D* like you were?

KOPP: Yes, that was one social group. The White Church—I think it's a Congregationalist church—used to have dances I think on Sunday night, although that seems counterintuitive. But I think they were. And there was some social life attached there. I met a girl who was a senior at Hanover High School who later went to Lesley College right next to Harvard Law School, and I kept in touch with her during the time she was there. That was most of the social life.

DONIN: Now the fraternities were opening back up at this point, right?

KOPP: The fraternities were just opening, but we never—to my recollection from July to November to probably March of 1946—I don't remember ever being in, in a fraternity house. And of course you couldn't have an automobile on campus.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

KOPP: So the social life was limited. Much of the social life was in this building which housed the movie theater.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: The Nugget.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: And I probably went to as many movies during that year as I've ever gone to because that was the only entertainment. Later, the following year, I remember going to a dance hall in Claremont a couple of times.

DONIN: Oh.

KOPP: With an older student, a World War II veteran, who was a premed major; and so we'd become quite friendly. But most of it was athletics. You played—I played basketball. There was no freshman team that winter, '45-'46. But I spent a lot of time playing, sometimes with members of the varsity team, especially from my class. There were a couple of freshmen who were on that varsity team.

DONIN: You were playing softball, too. There's a picture of you here.

KOPP: And a lot of softball. A picture no less.

DONIN: Is this a picture of you holding a softball?

KOPP: Oh, that was—yes. But that was senior. That was last.

DONIN: When you were a senior?

KOPP: Yes. I'm holding that because I organized and was the captain of our class softball team, which won the intramural championship over seven other teams.

DONIN: Pretty good.

KOPP: Yes, it was pretty good. So we played touch football out on The Green. And basketball during the winter. And then softball during the spring. The social life was limited.

DONIN: That was it, yes.

KOPP: Yes.

DONIN: Did you get involved in the Outing Club at all in terms of activities?

- KOPP: No, I didn't.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- KOPP: We had a one-day visit to Moosilauke that I remember. And I can't recall his name, but the great leader had some kind of a French or French-Canadian—I've forgotten his name; you've got it in the Archives.
- DONIN: Right.
- KOPP: We hiked up there, and I don't remember...it wasn't a long hike, maybe three, four miles from where we started. And that was the only outdoor activity. A regret and the surprising antithesis was that I never genuinely learned to ski. And never learned to ice skate although growing up in a city which had more inches of snow in the winter than Hanover did.
- DONIN: Sure.
- KOPP: I put on skis, and later I did some cross country, a very modest amount of skiing. But I never learned downhill skiing. So I devoted time to the traditional: touch football, basketball, softball.
- DONIN: So your life was pretty full. You were writing for *The D*, you were working hard because the courses were challenging.
- KOPP: Yes, they were hard.
- DONIN: And doing intramural sports.
- KOPP: Yes. And then—
- DONIN: Did you have a job?
- KOPP: I also... Freshman year, one of the first things I did was try to see if I could get a job.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- KOPP: And there was some place, must have been in College Hall, near the Commons; we all ate in the Commons. And I remember they sent me out on a job mowing lawns. I said to my son two days ago, I drove by some of the lawns out—

DONIN: Lyme Road?

KOPP: No, North Main Street.

DONIN: Rope Ferry Road.

KOPP: Yes, Rope Ferry Road. Hah! The biggest lawns I've ever seen. And I broke my pick on that after a couple of weeks. Then I worked in a photo shop developing film.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

KOPP: In a darkroom. And that was fine for a semester. But later I think it was in 1946, later I worked at—the summer of 1946 I worked at the Dartmouth Outing House; I was a busboy.

DONIN: Oh, yes.

KOPP: Because the Outing House would open to the public in June, close in September, close Labor Day. And I got a job as busboy, which gave me dinner; I think that's all we got was dinner. But it was fine. And then in the fall of '46 I got a job at the hospital.

DONIN: Ah.

KOPP: I did several different tasks at the hospital. I waited on tables for the student nurses.

DONIN: That must have been fun.

KOPP: Yes. Well, I was so young.

DONIN: Oh, that's true. You were still young. Yes.

KOPP: I was 18. And then I would carry trays, special diet trays, which meant loading the tray on the dumbwaiter, pulling the cord, and it would go up to the second floor and the third floor. And then I'd run up the stairs, take it off, bring it to the room of the patient. And then I was given the [laughs] assignment of collecting the garbage, which meant the dirty linen, the dirty bandages, and all of the other used material, which was burned in an incinerator. The incinerator was located in the basement. There was a funny story, and I would collect it on a given floor or part of a floor. I had a big white laundry

bag, a big bag. You'd put it over your shoulder. You'd get on the elevator. You'd go down to the basement. You'd take the bag, and you'd empty it on the floor. And then you'd get another one, and you'd get another one. You'd bring all the bags down and empty them, so you've got a pile outside the incinerator. Then what do you do? You open the door to the incinerator, and you take a shovel, and you shovel the used material into the incinerator.

DONIN: Oh!

KOPP: So my mother was appalled when I described it to her. But food was important, nutritional food. So my grandmother, who was an immigrant and always spoke with an accent, said to my mother, "Who cares"—in effect— "what kind of a job it is. Get him a muzzle then. He's getting three good meals a day." [Laughter]

DONIN: She was worried about the germs, right?

KOPP: My mother was worried about the germs. My grandmother's solution was, get him a muzzle. [Laughter] And keep the job. And that was a good job. I had that sophomore and junior years. And when I went down to Tuck School, I didn't work.

DONIN: You were busy.

KOPP: Yes.

DONIN: So did you ever join a fraternity?

KOPP: I did join. I should have joined in the fall of 1946, but I didn't get a bid to the fraternities that I wanted to. And I did get a bid to Zeta Psi, which I probably should have taken. And I think Theta Chi, too. But I wanted a bid to either Beta or Deke or this or that. Anyway, the next year I was serious about it. And if I'd gotten a bid to Deke, which is gone—What is it? Delta Epsilon? I don't what Deke stands for now. But among other things, there were two people from Syracuse: one was— That's right. There was one other person from Syracuse who was in the Marine Corps when I got here, and a well-known Syracuse family. And he was a Deke. He stayed on, took his last year after the war. And then the class of '50 had a fellow from Fayetteville, which was an upscale suburb—a little more upscale—that was on the east side of the city. But I eventually—there was a lot of pressure to join Pi Lambda Phi because of the fact that it was

a Jewish fraternity. I'm Jewish, so that's what I did. And so I had two years of that. Which doesn't exist either anymore.

DONIN: That doesn't exist.

KOPP: No.

DONIN: No. So Ernest Hopkins retired as soon as you basically got here.

KOPP: Just about. A major event that summer, it was in July of 1945, was the *New York Times* exposé of colleges discriminating in admissions against Jews.

DONIN: Oh.

KOPP: And there was at least one, maybe two articles. But I think the first one was front page.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

KOPP: Dartmouth was prominent in that. And I think there was an Ernest Martin Hopkins association, with comments that he had made in the '30s about too many Jews being admitted.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: And so that was certainly not a pleasant revelation. It didn't affect my view of Hopkins. I had no contact with him except the handshake when you matriculated. You got the handshake. And I think he did sign the certificate—some certificate that I might have; probably don't have. But anyway...

DONIN: What did your family think of that news about Dartmouth discriminating against Jews?

KOPP: They didn't say much about it. My father, he was, not that he was disdaining his heritage because he had been brought up very orthodox. So much so that it turned him against religion. And my mother, on the other hand, was conventional. She had never finished high school. She had to quit after her third year because of the tradition to go to work. The idea was that the girls would go to work to make money to send the boys to college, to medical school.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: So she was mindful of that. And she was upwardly mobile socially. And my mother had a pretty good temper and was very strong-willed and expressive, a trait that many attribute to me. But she never commented on it. My father was just happy I was in Dartmouth. And it didn't affect us.

DONIN: Did you feel any anti-Semitism yourself here?

KOPP: Once, and only once, and it was at a fraternity house. It may have been Phi Gamma. It was from a classmate, and I never forgot it. Who made some comment. But it was maybe the second or third year. Something like that. I never—I never had or felt it when I was a freshman. There was no organized Jewish activity because the fraternity didn't exist. There was no Roth Center.

DONIN: Mm-mmm.

KOPP: As there is now. I can't remember—I do remember. We had High Holy Days, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah services, in the chapel.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: And so you'd have whatever number we had, which first year wasn't many. Maybe 20, 25, something like that. And then after that, I really can't recall what I did on the High Holy Days. Of course, sometimes they would fall in September, and we wouldn't start until October first sometimes.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: So Ernest Martin Hopkins retires. Didn't mean much to me.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

KOPP: John Sloan Dickey was, in a relative way, more exciting; a prospect because of the background that he had. And we were brought up Democrats, all FDR, even when Wendell Wilkie ran. But we admired that kind of Republicanism with Wendell Wilkie and Warren Austin who became the United Nations representative. He's in the video I saw yesterday. And that was the cut of John Sloan Dickey.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: Out of that kind of thinking. Internationalist thinking. So that kind of excited me and I think most of us.

DONIN: Did you have any reason to interact with him ever? Did you ever meet him?

KOPP: No. I met him, I guess, when I graduated. I was deferential. But those figures were a bit intimidating to me.

DONIN: Sure, sure.

KOPP: Lloyd Neidlinger was the dean, very intimidating. I never had a problem where I was called into his office. But I didn't want to be called into his office. The dean of freshmen—we only had two deans which is one of my complaints about the bureaucracy of the college now. There was Stearns Morse who was an English professor and a true New England type of personality. And I met with him a couple of times. I think at least once was on his initiative. In other words, he would meet with everybody entering in July or in November as the case might be. And I was interested in English. I liked to write. Wanted to take writing courses. Francis Childs was the freshman English professor. And he was a dominating professorial figure. And later I had some, of course, interplay with Donald Morrison and then with David Dayton McKean who was a government professor; I took every one of his courses I could, and I always got an A. And there was a justice of the peace, probably a lawyer, and I think his name was Stone, who taught a course on the law, which I took my junior year. It was mainly with Donald Morrison and David Dayton McKean. I sat in a seminar once as a freshman, probably in the spring of 1946, that third semester, with Robert Frost.

DONIN: Oh.

KOPP: And I think that was because that third semester I was in a writing class. And that was intimidating because it was a small class, maybe 19, 18, maybe less. But I think everybody was a World War II veteran—older.

DONIN: That was my next question. So you did have them in your classes.

KOPP: Yes. Oh, yes. And I had them in my introductory government classes. But in English particularly they were intimidating because

they had more to write about. Government, less so. I felt that I could hold my own independently in government.

DONIN: So these were classmates of yours, or not?

KOPP: No.

DONIN: Not necessarily.

KOPP: They were upperclassmen.

DONIN: Mmm. Mmm.

KOPP: In July I can't recall us having many veterans. I'd have to look. If I looked at the, what do you call it? The Green Book, the freshman book—

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: I might be able to identify them. But there weren't more than five, ten—ten at most.

DONIN: 'Forty-six was when they really started to pour back in.

KOPP: They started to come in, in really the spring of 1946.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

KOPP: In November, after the first semester was over, I moved to New Hampshire with Bob Weber. And I went up to look at the room yesterday; it was Room 404. But it's been remodeled so you can't locate any milestones or land marks. But it was a two-man room. But the college was beginning to be overcrowded.

DONIN: Yes.

KOPP: And a returning veteran who was a class of '42, Al Barack—marvelous fellow—was assigned to the room. So they just put a bed in the living room; we had to sleep three to a room. And then—I know what I did. The third semester I moved off campus. I found a room around Sargent Street with a family that spring. By the spring, the institutions had revived. And two of the major figures for me were Jerry Tallmer and Alex Fanelli, who were editor and co-editor or assistant chief editor, respectively, and they were both returning

veterans. Had a major influence on my thinking. I looked up to them. Of course Jerry Tallmer later founded the Village Voice. I think Alex Fanelli stayed around the area, stayed around the Upper Valley and did some things with the college.

DONIN: He became special assistant to President [John] Kemeny.

KOPP: Ha! Okay. Yes. Well, and *the Dartmouth* staff, when they came back, when the *Daily D* reopened, they were the leaders, all the military people. We freshmen, even sophomores were the reporters. That's why you might see so many of those articles. And then finally in my junior year I got a column as assistant sports editor.

DONIN: So it was very different, though, once those veterans came pouring back.

KOPP: Yes, it was different. Although they were, at least at *The D*, they were not overbearing.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: And *The D* took a lot of time because it was printed every night. And that was part of your responsibility as a heeler. Remember the word heeler?

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

KOPP: You didn't try out for something, you heeled for something. You were a heeler. And we were heelers at least through May or June, whenever that semester ended, in 1946. And I spent many a night down at that printing plant proofreading.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: As it came off the press. And then you'd go to class. And classes were eight o'clock.

DONIN: When did you sleep?

KOPP: Well, on those nights you didn't sleep.

DONIN: Oh!

- KOPP: You came back to the room. You'd sleep. Maybe you'd get a couple—you'd have a couple of hours of sleep at five in the morning or four in the morning, whenever the last collections were made from proofreading. But you'd read those galley proofs. That was part of the responsibility of being a heeler in order to qualify for the next step. [Laughter]
- DONIN: Yes, yes. Amazing. The schedule you kept was just...
- KOPP: But I didn't think anything of it. I thought it was normal.
- DONIN: It was probably exciting putting that paper out.
- KOPP: Oh, yes, yes. Putting the paper out was exciting.
- DONIN: Yes.
- KOPP: And I've always been interested in politics since my father ran for county treasurer when I was seven years old. There was a fair amount of political activity, and I was an identifiable liberal Democrat.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- KOPP: At a time when approximately 75 percent of the student population consisted of registered Republicans.
- DONIN: Right, right.
- KOPP: The Democrats were a distinct minority. Of course Jerry Tallmer and Alex Fanelli were very liberal Democrats. And I'll think of some of the other people who were there. I know John Wolff was because his brother Richie was a classmate of mine, who lives in Portland, Oregon, but I still see.
- DONIN: What was the name of the guy who spoke up yesterday? Was it Reynolds?
- KOPP: Dave Reynolds. I forgot to say to Dave that I remember the National Students Association, the NSA. But I didn't know Dave well. I just knew him superficially in college.
- DONIN: Yes.

- KOPP: That was interesting. I wasn't a part of that. I wasn't a part of that because that was identified with the Communists.
- DONIN: Right.
- KOPP: And my mother particularly just despised the Communists. Devout Democrat. First woman on the Onondaga County Democratic Committee. But she despised the Communists like the Nazis. And we went to the World's Fair at Flushing in 1939 and we went through the Russian exhibit and she came out and said, 'What a bunch of propaganda.' [Laughter] And she once excoriated me because there was some kind of – I'll think of it maybe – called the Stockholm Statement or something like that I signed one day in downtown Syracuse. I got home and I was telling her the story and she excoriated me for signing something like that. So I don't recall much political activity on campus as such. Organized.
- DONIN: Right, right.
- KOPP: But around the newspaper there was an aura of political liberalism.
- DONIN: Right.
- KOPP: Almost every.... Howie Samuels, Howie Samuels. He later stayed in publishing of some kind, associated with some magazine. He was a managing editor.
- DONIN: Now what about the Great Issues course? Did you take it?
- KOPP: I sure did.
- DONIN: Before you went down to Tuck?
- KOPP: Now it started.... John Sloan Dickey became president November 1945. I think that started by 1947. That's a question I can't answer now. I either took it while I was at Tuck. You came up Monday night to Dartmouth Hall, No. 105. And then Tuesday morning you had a session in 105 with the speaker. And Thursday you had a session with the teaching assistant you'd call them? In fact one of them was Jack Halpin, who was class of 1946. And later wound up in Shasta County in Northern California. And later wound up in Shasta County in northern California and later, under Pat Brown's governorship, was appointed to the superior court. He'd gone to law school. I didn't know where he—he didn't go to Harvard because I would

have seen him at Harvard. And I saw Jack just a couple of years ago. As a matter of fact, he does what I do now—he's older than I. After you retire, the California Judicial Council maintains a program for retired judges called the Assigned Judges Program. So you can preside on assignment. It might be one week, two weeks, might be a month. And Jack has been doing that for probably ten years. But he was a young, blond guy. And he was one of the assistants in Great Issues. The office was downstairs in Baker Library. It was in the basement.

DONIN: Yes, yes.

KOPP: And it was impressive. And the speakers we obtained—and that must have been John Sloan Dickey....

DONIN: Oh, yes, his connections with the State Department.

KOPP: And elsewhere. We had Richard Nixon, where I learned to hate Richard Milhous Nixon. [Laughs] And I've forgotten others, but they were—Dean Acheson spoke that year.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: But I think it had to be '48-'49 because it had to be seniors only.

DONIN: So your senior year when you were at Tuck must have been marred as it was for everybody that year because of the Ray Cirotta event.

KOPP: I just talked to Richie Wolff about it yesterday.

KOPP: I mentioned a person from Syracuse, who was from Fayetteville. That person was Tom Doxsee and Tom Doxsee's mother and my mother were friendly through charitable organizational work. But Tom Doxsee was a year behind me. And lo and behold, some writer who lives in Israel is writing a book which deals with the life of Ray Cirotta. [...] Ray Cirotta came from New York, but he'd gone to Peekskill Military Academy. Gene Kelly of my class went to Peekskill High School and they were both smallish. Five-nine, five-eight, maybe five-ten. But they played football and they played against each other in high school. And I think they roomed together at least the first semester because they knew each other. And military schools in that era were places for misbehaving boys. [...] But Ray was a tremendous athlete. He was a halfback in football. Good basketball player. I don't remember him so much playing

softball, although he played. And he was just a hell-raiser his freshman year. I was a year, year and a half younger than almost everybody in my class. So they were subject to the draft, 1946. The draft didn't end I guess 'til '40— It never really ended in a sense until after Korea. But I escaped the draft in that sense. They didn't. They were a year older. So when they were 18, 19, they all went in. Most of them. And Ray was one. I didn't see him probably until 1948, my last year. He came back. And I didn't see him very much. I have a memory of watching him play touch football on The Green with a ragtag group of people who weren't Dartmouth students. Probably high school students. And I thought, "There's crazy Ray." And I wasn't in any classes because I was at Tuck School. But I was very friendly with Gene Kelly who by that time was living in the Beta house with Bert Rodman. And mildly friendly with Richie Wolff. And the third person in their room in '48-'49 was Vince— Vinnie— Weintraub. Vinnie Weintraub. He was a skinny kid about five feet nine, five feet ten. Kind of a hyperactive fellow. And that occurred on a Friday night. And of course Saturday morning I heard about it, and it was a mournful period, a mournful day. And I couldn't imagine it. My best friend, who was Stanley Nelson, also known as Shrimp because he was five foot seven, but he was a good basketball player. He played freshman basketball and played one year on the varsity. And he had somehow gotten to know Ray and Richie. He was deeply affected. And the rumors began as to how it happened. And then Tom Doxsee's name appears. Tom was like, in a way, a young brother. He was a Deke, but we often drove to and from Syracuse, etc. And then the others were in the class of 1951. No, one was Bill Felton, an end whom I liked very much. Nice, nice fellow. And he, I think, pleaded to a manslaughter later. Another was George Schreck, the center, who was gruff, not a very social person. And I was covering them writing sports for *The D*. So I knew them. But I knew Bill independently, Bill Felton. In fact I was in an education class with him. And Bob Fox was from Philadelphia, a guard. I didn't know him particularly. And I've forgotten who was—one other one. But let's see, there was Felton, Schreck, Bob Fox. There was Tommy Doxsee, and there was a fifth person. Anyway, a fraternity brother, who was then in the med school, Sam Katz, was class of 1948, probably on Sunday tells us that he was in the emergency room when Ray Cirotta was brought to Mary Hitchcock, and that his body was a mass of welts, indicating he'd been pummeled. That the cause of death was not striking his head on a radiator. But in any event, the rest of the story is known as to what the court proceedings were, and you could make a pretty good novel out of that or write a good book, on the fact the

prosecutor's a Dartmouth graduate, the judge is. I've forgotten who the defense lawyers were. But at least a couple of them were. Well, that was in March. And then spring vacation, Easter vacation, came up. So I went home. Now they were suspended immediately from the college. I went out to Fayetteville to see Tom Doxsee. And we talked in his living room. And he said to me, "I never knew the guy." He said, "What kind of a guy was he?" And I'm debating whether I should fudge or should not. I guess it's my nature not to. I say that with either modesty or with confessions. And I said, he was a good guy as far as I was concerned. Well, I think Tom Doxsee pleaded to some lesser charge. I think Bill Felton took the major hit for some reason. I don't know what happened to Schreck and Bob Fox. And that was it. Fast forward to the year 1995, my high school class, Nottingham High School in Syracuse, has a 50th reunion. And who shows up but Tom Doxsee. He'd married a girl in my class. Yes. And we just had kind of... But of course just to put a tag on that story, the hearsay was that Ray had become radicalized upon his return from Army service. He'd been stationed in Japan. In fact I remember hearing stories that he had a pretty good assignment playing basketball and football much of the time in Japan. But he'd become radicalized, and he would express himself accordingly in class. And he took an education class. Education was viewed as a gut department and gut courses. And I took an education class and got an A easily. And the football players tended to like education courses. So that was the scene of the encounters in which he would ridicule positions that they took. I never had a lengthy conversation with Ray about politics. But that was a very grievous part. And as a matter of fact, it soured me until I left. I just wanted to leave, it was that—I wanted to finish. And my best friend, Shrimp Nelson, who was a junior, so he was a year behind me, said the same thing. And he had a Dartmouth tradition. His brother Mel was class of 1947. But I remember the distinct feeling I couldn't wait to get off campus. That's how it affected me.

DONIN: I'm sure.

KOPP: Yes.

DONIN: And the rest of the class. It was a terrible way to end your career here.

KOPP: Yes, yes. Well, it would affect people who knew Ray.

DONIN: Right.

KOPP: People like Richie Wolf. I've never asked Richie that question, what if—Although Richie probably had another year because he'd gone in the Army, too. But people like Gene Kelly. Even Bert Rodman to an extent. I've forgotten who else Ray was friendly with. I know his fraternity was Phi Sigma Kappa.

[End of Interview]