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Dartmouth College Oral History Program
Dartmouth Community and Dartmouth's World
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WOMICK: Today is Friday, August 9th, 2013, and I am here in Rauner Library.

So to get us started, why don't you introduce yourself and talk about where you grew up?

WAUGH: Okay. My name is Shermaine Waugh, and I was actually born in Gloucester, England, but I only lived there for five years before I moved to Florida, and I pretty much lived in Florida for the majority of my life, so that's where I consider, like, you know, my home. Yeah, Florida for, like, 15 years, and then—actually, one year I spent in Massachusetts before that.

WOMICK: What kind of schools did you attend?

WAUGH: It was always largely public schools. I pretty much stayed, like,—in elementary school, middle school and then high school, like, I pretty much stayed within, like, the same school system, so I always knew the same people, like, that were there. It was only until high school that I switched from, like, one high school to another. So I spent two years in one high school and then two years in another.

WOMICK: How'd you hear about Dartmouth?

WAUGH: I actually can't remember. I feel like it was probably some sort of, like, flier, like, advertisement in the mail [chuckles] that I saw. Or it's very likely that I was just, like, looking for, like, stuff online about colleges, and I was just like, *Okay, hey, Dartmouth*. To be honest, it wasn't, like, a place where I was, like, *Ohh! I've always wanted to go to Dartmouth College*. It was just kind of like I saw it, and then I was, like, *You know, why not?* [Chuckles.] At that point, I think I was interested in going into, like, environmental sciences or something, and it seemed like Dartmouth had, like, a pretty big focus on the environment. So I was, like, *You know, why not?* [Chuckles.]

WOMICK: Cool! Cool. Did you get to visit the campus before you actually came here as a student?

WAUGH: I went to, like, this—I did—I forget what program it was, but it was, like, a reach-out to students who had applied, and, like, I guess they wanted you to come, so they paid for my trip out here, and I visited, and I stayed with a student who just hosted me. And I guess, like, when I visited, I didn't—wasn't in, like, in love with it. I really thought I was, like, a beautiful campus, but I think it was just, like, a weird situation for my host. [Laughs.] Like I didn't—... She was kind of like not very—she wasn't super friendly? And so I was, like, *Oh, I don't know if I'll fit in here.* [Laughter.] So that kind of worried me, but I think that I just—

I think one thing that stuck out to me was that I was walking around one day by myself, and I was kind of lost, and somebody saw me and was, like, "Oh, do you need help?" [Chuckles.] Like, "Where are you going?" And she helped me find the host's dorm, and so, I don't know, little things like that always stick in my mind, even though they're kind of stupid.

So that kind of persuaded me to continue with the process, and I ended up choosing Dartmouth. [Chuckles.] Yeah.

WOMICK: Cool.

So when you came here as an official student for the first time, say, orientation, did you go on a first-year trip?

WAUGH: I did. I went on cabin camping. Very strenuous [laughs] trip. No, not really. [Laughter.] It was probably, like, one mile of hiking [laughs] involved. It was a pretty good experience. Like, I don't think that I had, like, the typical—"typical" experience of, like, bonding with your trip mates and, you know, always staying in contact with them afterwards at Dartmouth. But while I was on the trip, I definitely enjoyed it.

I think that [chuckles] when I was there, I was, like, very overwhelmed by it and just thinking, like, *Oh, my gosh, everyone is so, like, outdoorsy! And, like, I just love this! It's, like, so great!* [Chuckles.] And then, you know, obviously

that's not, like, the reality of what it is. But I enjoyed the trip regardless.

WOMICK: Yeah. So what was orientation and freshman fall like?

WAUGH: [Laughs.] That was interesting. Actually, before I came to Dartmouth, like, maybe, like, four weeks or so before, my father had passed away, so it was, like, a really weird, like, stressful time. And I remember, like, being on campus and just kind of like, wanting to—like, part of me, like, kind of wanted be—to move on from that part of my life, but, like, not, like—but it was still at the back of my mind, obviously, so it was kind of like a stressful period, like, trying to meet new people and, like, make friends, and then, at the same time, like, I have this, like, kind of, like, weight, like just weighing on me. So I don't know. It was just, like, a very confusing time. [Chuckles.]

WOMICK: Yeah. Yeah.

So a lot of people find their first group of friends on their freshman floor. Did you find that to be the case?

WAUGH: No. [Laughs.] Not at all. I was, like, first floor Cohen, in the Choates, and I'd say, like, my floor was, like, pretty—they wanted to, like, party a lot and, like, hang out. And—although I met, like, a few nice people on my floor, who I still talk to, it wasn't, like, meeting somebody and then, like, instantly bonded and we're, like, best friends for life. [Laughs.]

Actually, freshman year, I didn't, like, make a lot of, like, close friends because I think that just naturally I'm a pretty, like, quiet, introverted person. Like, throughout my entire life, like, people are always, like, "Oh, she's that, like, quiet girl who, like, doesn't talk a lot." And I, like, still get that. People are just, like, surprised to hear me say anything at all. That's just, like,—it's been my life.

So freshman year I didn't make a lot of close friends. It wasn't until I joined fencing that I actually made some close friends.

WOMICK: Okay.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: So what was it like, being at Dartmouth then, for freshman year?

WAUGH: It was kind of like a shock to me. When I was in high school, I was used to—I guess it's kind of similar for most people here. You're used to being, like, on top of, like, every single class, and everyone, like, knows who you are, and, like, "Oh, you're that smart girl." And here I was, like, *Everybody is totally smart.* [Chuckles.] Obviously. So, like, I went from being, like, top of the class to being, like, oh, like, mid-range. Or, like, whatever. And it was kind of like—it was very depressing to me.

I remember always talking to my mom and being, like, "Oh, it's, like, not what I thought." And, like, "I'm not doing as well as I hoped." And she would always be, like, "Don't compare yourself to everybody else." But it's really hard, like, when you're in that situation, and you see everybody else, like, really excelling, and you're just kind of like stagnant or, you know, maybe at the bottom sometimes. And so that was challenging for me, and I didn't really know how to deal with it because as somebody who isn't very outgoing, I didn't really know, like, how to reach out to other people and, like, say, like, "Maybe I need help in, like, certain areas of my classes." So I didn't know how to do that, so I kind of like stayed, like, in my little box and was, like, *Oh, I don't really know what to do, but I don't know who to talk to about it.*

WOMICK: Yeah. Yeah. So did you go home for the summer afterward?

WAUGH: Actually, for the—for Japanese, the Japanese LSA is the summer after your first three courses, so instead of going home, I went to Japan. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: Big difference.

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: What was that like?

WAUGH: It was, like, totally, like,—I had never been—like, I'd been out of the country before, but, like, never in, like, a non-Eng—

primarily English-speaking country. So I was just like really— [Chuckles.] A huge shock. I was, like, really scared that I wouldn't be able to communicate with people at all. But surprisingly, like, Dartmouth language courses just really prepare you for that. Like, just three terms of Japanese, and I was able to, you know, ask for directions if I was lost and, like, talk with my host family. And it was, like, a great time. I really liked, like, the people in the Japanese LSA group. They were really nice people.

WOMICK: So did you come straight back for sophomore year?

WAUGH: I actually took the fall off [chuckles] because I [laughs] was like, *I don't want to be on that long.*

WOMICK: It would have been a lot.

WAUGH: Yeah. So I took the fall off, and I kind of like decompressed at home for that term, which was really nice 'cause I think that, like, all of, like, the stress from, like, my father and then, like, being—not having, like, a ton of friends and all of that was just, like, kind of getting to me, so I just used that term to kind of just relax and be lazy [chuckles] and sleep all the time. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: Sounds nice.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: And so then you came back for winter term.

WAUGH: Yes.

WOMICK: What was *that* like, after having been gone?

WAUGH: [Laughs.] It was really interesting because the new stu—the '14s were there, and it was I think, like, the first—like, winter term for fencing is, like, the most—it's when we have most of our competitions, so once I got back on campus, like, that is basically—I was, like, thrown back into that, like, world. And actually, like, when—like, winter term for me was kind of like that turning point, when I started to get, like, close friends. And that's when I met, like, the '14s who, like,—yeah, all of my close friends are '14s. [Laughs.] I just met those people

there, and I think that really kind of changed my—just my Dartmouth experience.

I think before, it was primarily, like, just a very lonely, like, by-myself existence, and then winter term it kind of changed, and I was able to, like, reach out to more people.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Did you find that coming back sophomore year after a lot of people had gone through rush, that that changed anything about being at Dartmouth for you?

WAUGH: It kind of did. Before, like, freshman year I would talk to, like, upperclassmen about rush, and it seemed like something that you just do. Like, you know, you're here. You go through your freshman year and then just, like, naturally the next year you just rush. You just do it. [Laughs.] And I was, like, prepared to, like, go through that process.

But then for,—I don't know, somewhere along the line I was just, like, *You know, do I really wanna do this? Do I really wanna, like, have to—I don't have, like, a lot of disposable income, so do I really want to have to, like, pay dues, to, like, hang out?* And I'm not, like, a huge party person either, so I didn't know if that was what I wanted to do with my time.

And then when I came back, I'm, like, *I have fencing, and it's something I enjoy, and I've met friends through it, so I don't think I need a sorority.* So—

WOMICK: Basically a friend group that you pay for.

WAUGH: Right. [Laughter.] I was, like, *You know, I'd just rather save my money.*

WOMICK: Yeah.

WAUGH: [Laughs.]

WOMICK: Yeah.

What about the rest of sophomore year? Because you were here for spring and summer, then?

- WAUGH: Yeah. What *was* that like? [Laughs.] I feel like, *What have I done with my life at Dartmouth? I can't even remember it.*
- I guess it just was, like, a lot of—oh. No, it wasn't. That was junior year. [Laughs.]
- WOMICK: [Laughs.]
- WAUGH: Yeah, I guess, like, sophomore year was just, like, the year of, like, doing—throwing myself into my work and jus', like, fencing. I think it was just, like, fencing and school work. And that was my life. [Chuckles.] And then slowly I became, like, more friend-centered. It wasn't until junior year that I was, like, going out, which I hadn't really done before?
- WOMICK: Mm-hm.
- WAUGH: Yeah. So I was, like, a boring person sophomore year. [Laughs.]
- WOMICK: Were there any professors that particularly stood out to you during that time?
- WAUGH: Because I was still taking a lot of Japanese courses, my Japanese professor, [Ikuko] Watanabe Sensei was just, like, amazing. [Chuckles.] She's just, like, really animated and really fun. But at the same time, she's, like, always there for you. She was always, like, "Oh, if you need any extra help, like, just come to my office." And, like, any time. And then, like, if you're in her office, she'd be, like, "Oh, are you okay?" Like, just, like,—like, wellness. Like, not, like, "Oh, are you doing okay in the class?" And I thought that was, like, really helpful?
- WOMICK: Mm-hm.
- WAUGH: I'll always remember her because of that. [Laughs.]
- WOMICK: Yeah, that's a very special thing to have in a professor.
- WAUGH: Yeah.
- WOMICK: So then what about junior year?

WAUGH: Junior year, I was, like, really close to those '14s that I talked about from fencing.

WOMICK: Mm-hm.

WAUGH: And so we started hanging out together and, like, cooking meals together and then just, like, going out to, like, fraternities together. And then that's when I had—I guess in freshman year on my Japanese LSA is when I, like, had the experience of, like,—I'd had alcohol before—like, wine and stuff at home, like, with my family. But, like, not, like, drinking, drinking! Like, a lot of drinking. And that was in Japan. That was my first experience with that.

And then junior year, I had that experience, like, in the fraternities, so, waiting for people to, like, pour you a beer or, like, whatever, and then having to ask people to, like, do this, and then trying to get on table and standing around, and then being—you know, whether or not you get on table is based on, like, whether somebody, like, likes the way you look or whatever or, like, wants to talk to you. And it was just, like,—seeing it first hand kind of made me glad that I didn't join the sororities just because I didn't want to—for me personally, I didn't want to be involved in that. But it was nice hanging out with my friends and just having something to do at night.

WOMICK: Yeah.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: So you found that you were able to still go out and enjoy some parts of the Greek system even though you weren't actually affiliated with it?

WAUGH: Right. I think—I guess most of the parts that I mostly enjoyed were drinking with my friends beforehand, before actually going out [chuckles], and then you would just, like, kind of wander around and just talk and be silly, and then afterwards just, like, go to Collis and be really drunk and, like—

WOMICK: [Laughs.]

WAUGH: —eat random food [laughs] that was just—we shouldn't be eating. So it was kind of—it wasn't really—I guess we had, like, funny experiences in, like, different Greek houses, but it was more, like, outside of the realm of that spectrum. Like, our fun while we were drinking or whatever, partying, didn't always happen, like, within, like, a certain house or anything.

WOMICK: Were the people you were hanging out with affiliated, any of them?

WAUGH: Yeah, actually. [Laughs.] Like, both of my best friends are affiliated, but it's int'resting because neither of them, like, really, like, spend a lot of time with their house, so, like, they're people [chuckles] just who are affiliated by name but, like, are mostly, like,—they don't really go to a lot of 'tails functions or, like, a lot of the—not people that are always, like, takin' pictures together, like, doin' [laughter] that kind of thing. So I don't think they feel, like, they're, like, really, like, sisters. But, you know, it's like a friend group that they occasionally do stuff with.

WOMICK: Yeah. I think that's how it is for a lot of people.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: If you look at the official rosters for the houses, you know, so many people!

WAUGH: Right, and then just a small group that actually [chuckles] do, like, all, like, the extreme hanging out all the time.

WOMICK: Yeah.

So moving into senior year.

WAUGH: Mmm. I thought that, like,—ugh. I think beginning of the senior year I was kind of like, *Oh, I really don't wanna leave*. Like, because—I think it's because it had taken me so long, I guess, in comparison to most people to, like, develop, like, a strong friend base, I just was, like, *Oh, I don't wanna leave them*. And they're, like, '14s, so they're gonna be here, and I have to go away. So that was hard for me.

But then, like, towards the end of senior year is when it started getting stressful for me. [Whispers] Darnit. Sorry. [Voice cracks with emotion.] I'm getting, like, emotional for no reason. [Pause.]

Okay. I just, like, always have a problem with—it's, like, I'm not sad or anything, but, like, just, like, talking about some certain things just makes me emotional. I just, like...always kind of had, like, a problem with just, like, social anxiety and just, like, being depressed, so that was something that I, like, dealt with throughout my Dartmouth career, but senior year it just got really awful because of, like, that impending sense of, you know, not really knowing what to do with your life and then leaving people who I really loved.

So that was, like, a really difficult time. And I just remember spending, like,—I don't know, there was, like, maybe two or three weeks where I would just, like, be in my room, and I would just, like, leave, like, my room for, like, maybe, like, an hour [chuckles] every day, and the rest of it would just be, like, lying in bed and just, like, doing nothing [chuckles] because I just—I don't know, just, like, felt that I couldn't do anything. And that was, like, the worst that I thought, like, my depression had gotten.

And at that point, like, one of my best friends was away. She was doing an internship, and the other—she was still on campus, but it's kind of hard to, like, figure out how to talk to somebody about that, even if they're, like, really close to you, 'cause it's kind of like, you know, how do you explain? "Oh, I'm just, like, really sad. I don't know what to do." [Laughs.] So that was, like, really weird, senior year.

And I think the last few months, I just wanted it to be over with so I could go home and, like, be—just trying to, like, normalize myself or something. [Chuckles.] So I think it was good that I was able to come back, but I kind of don't want that experience to repeat itself because I'm—I mean, obviously everybody has to, like, move on from, like, a certain stage in their life, and I just think that in particular I have a lot of—I just have a hard time doing that because I kind of always want things to stay the same. [Chuckles.] Yeah.

WOMICK: Yeah. But you got to stay here.

WAUGH: Yeah, I did. [Laughter.] So, like, this has been a great opportunity for me because one of my friends is on for the summer as well, so we can hang out a lot, so that's really great. Yeah, thinking back, I guess, like, senior year for me was just, like,—it feels like such a big blur because I was just, like, trying to, like, power through everything and just—I just had, like—I don't know. It seemed like everybody else was, like, pretty set on what they were going to do after graduation, and I was still, like, really, like, kind of scrambling and, like, not really knowing. [Chuckles.]

And it seems like if you weren't going into a job, then you were going to grad school. And I was, like, *Okay, fine, I'll go to grad school, but I don't even know what I want to go to grad school for.* [Laughs.] I was an English major, and it just seemed like I didn't want to go to grad school for, like, more English. I think, *What am I gonna do?* [Laughs.] Like, more English.

I didn't want to teach, and I initially wanted to go into, like, journalism, like, before I came to Dartmouth. But then I decided, *No, I don't want to do that anymore.* [Chuckles.] So, yeah, it was just, like, really confusing and, like, scary and just, like, everything was happening all at once, and I didn't know, like, what to do with all those feelings.

WOMICK: Yeah. So how did you wind up working at Rauner?

WAUGH: When I was an undergrad here, I started working at the cataloguing and metadata part of the library in Baker-Berry, sophomore year, I believe. And I just—I don't know, it's, like, really menial data entry kind of work, but I found that I really enjoyed it, and so I was, like, *You know,—*

And I also—before Dartmouth, I had experience, like, working in libraries, or whatever, volunteering, and I enjoyed it, but I never considered it, like, seriously as a career because, like, *Oh, that's what other people do when they don't know,—* [Laughs.] Like, it's not what you do when you come to, like, an Ivy League school. You have to, like, become, like, a lawyer or a doctor or something 'cause you went to [chuckles] Dartmouth. That's what you do.

So I never really seriously considered it until I think I just, like, took a look at my life and was, like, *You know, I don't want to waste, like, my time doing something that I don't, like, have a passion for.* And I really like writing, I really like books and libraries, so I was, like, *You know, why not? Why not just, like, take that opportunity, like, to work in Rauner in Special Collections and start, like, a career path in working in libraries? Like, why not do that? Like, who cares if other people are doing other things? Like, it's about what makes each individual happy.*

WOMICK: Yeah. And so you're here for the next year.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: Have you given any thoughts to after that yet?

WAUGH: I will be going to library school [chuckles], so I guess I'm going to have to take, like, the GREs and everything. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: After all.

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughter.] So I have to, like, think about doing that. But I think that's basically what I'm gonna be doing for the rest of my life. I'm gonna go to library school and then see if I can pursue a career in—maybe in an academic library or a congressional library.

WOMICK: Very cool.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: So looking at that, too, how do you think your relationship with Dartmouth will change over time? How do you expect yourself being involved as an alumna?

WAUGH: [Chuckles.] It's, like,—especially working here now, it's kind of int'resting to see how many, like, alumni come back and they're very excited to, like, show their families, like, certain things about Dartmouth or, like, look up—like, "Oh, this is my picture in, like, the yearbook" and, you know, tell people about, like, how great of an experience they had here.

But I don't think that—I don't know. For me, I really enjoyed, like, the educational aspect that I got here, and I really appreciate the friendships that I've made here, but I don't think that I would ever, like, say, like, "Dartmouth has been such a wonderful part of my life." You know, I don't think that I'd, like, bring my children back here and be, like, "Oh, my God! This is, like, where I went to school and, like, had so much fun!" I just don't consider it a big—I just didn't consider it like a big positive part of my life here. Not to say that Dartmouth is bad or anything, but I just didn't have, like, that attachment to it that I've seen some other people have.

And so I don't know if I'll be, like, one of those alums who comes back to, like, all of the reunions [chuckles] and, like, drinks so heavily—

WOMICK: [Laughs.]

WAUGH: —parties with everybody else. I think I'll just, you know, be, like, "Oh, yeah, I went to school there. It was nice." [Chuckles.] That's about it.

WOMICK: Do you think there are certain types of people that have an easier time having a really great Dartmouth experience and feeling like they fit in?

WAUGH: I definitely think that, like,—obviously, everybody's gonna have, like, their own challenges, wherever they are. And no doubt, like, other people are probably experiencing, like, the same kinds of, like, feelings of, like, depression, anxiety that I have. But I do think that there are probably people who are more used to the sort, like,—hmm. I don't know how I wanna say this. [Laughs.]

There are probably, like, some students who are able to, like, fit in with the Dartmouth culture more than others. I do think that it's kind of—you know, you do have students from all backgrounds, but largely it's kind of, like, an affluent primarily, Caucasian [laughs] school—like, culture. And I think that there are obviously some people who are going to be more used to that and blend in and be able to just, like, interact with the rest of that culture easily, whereas people

who are not familiar with that are probably gonna have a hard time.

And I think for me, that was probably one of my challenges. Like, I went to, like, middle school, elementary school, high school with, like, —they were all primarily white high schools, but here it just felt like kind of, like, more overwhelming, and the fact that everybody—even though, like, those schools that I went to before were primarily white, I felt like everybody had, like, differing levels of, like, financial, like—you know, whatever. They all had, like, their—other people had economic hardships, and other people just, like, had an ease with, like, money and whatever.

But I feel like here, a lot of it was, like, a majority of people who don't have a lot of trouble with, like, financial things, so that was also, like, overwhelming for me and, like, dealing with that.

WOMICK: Yeah.

So there's been a lot of talk—I mean, you know, there was, like, the Dimensions stuff—

WAUGH: [Laughs.]

WOMICK: And everything else surrounding that. But how would you say that not being Caucasian and not being a man and not being affluent has affected your time at Dartmouth? Specifically or just, you know, broad strokes.

WAUGH: I, like, will always remember this, like, coming—Oh, sorry! Sorry. [Answers phone. Conversation not transcribed from 26:08 to 27:30.] [Call drops.] Ok, anyway. [Chuckles.]

WOMICK: Do you need to call back? It's fine.

WAUGH: Sorry. [Laughs.] [Calls back. Conversation not transcribed from 27:38 to 28:44]. Sorry. I'm, like, having a car from home coming, so—yeah. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: Cool. Not a problem.

So I think—

WAUGH: What was I saying?

WOMICK: Yeah, about how, being *you*,—

WAUGH: [Laughs.]

WOMICK: —has worked out at Dartmouth.

WAUGH: Yeah. I always, like, kind of tell this, like, story of, like, there was one time when I was, like, coming from Collis, just minding my own business, and there was, like, this middle-aged, like, white woman who was, like, coming across the Green, and it seemed like she was, like, touring Dartmouth or something. Maybe, like, her child was going to come here. And she asked me for directions to some place, and I was, like, “Oh, you know, it’s, like, just right over there.” And then she kind of, like, stops me, and is, like, “So”—you know, just kind of like started talking about the school but then was, like, “Um, yeah, so I was kind of worried—like, I’m a teacher, and I was kind of worried about, like, my son or daughter coming here because it seems like, very, like,—like an affluent, like, you know, area.”

And I was, like, “Yeah, it kind of is.” And she’s, like, “Well, how do you feel as, like, somebody who’s, like, from, like, a lower, like, income—like, background?” You know? [Laughter.] “Like, how do *you* feel about that? Like, how do you feel you fit in?” And I was just kind of, like,—it just, like, took me by surprise that, like, she would just assume that I’m from, like, a lower-income background, like, knowing nothing about me, just assuming. [Laughs.]

And, yeah, I was just kind of like, you know,—I didn’t correct her, but I just, like, “There are people who I—I have friends with people who have more money and people who have, like, less money,” and I said that, “You know, I still felt like I had a good time.” But I, like, will always remember that [chuckles] as, like, something that totally stuck out with me.

WOMICK: Wow!

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughs.] It was, like, just because I was black, she assumed [chuckles] that I couldn’t be one of those people

who, you know, came from money. And I feel like that was kind of like a blatant experience, but I feel like there's been, like, —been, like, little things about just—I don't know, just, like, little instances of hanging out with people who might have more money than I do so they're able to do more things, like go out to dinner more often than I am. And it's never been a lot of, like, overt situations of, like, people calling out, like, "Oh, hey, you're poor" [laughter] and whatnot, but, you know, just, like, little everyday things that kind of, like, get under your skin, like the more that they happen.

WOMICK: Mm-hm.

WAUGH: It was the same thing with, like, racial issues, like going to a fraternity with my friend who is Asian. Like, we went to some frat, and we were just sitting, eating their food, just hanging out [laughs] and somebody came in and, like, started speaking Chinese to her, and was like, "Oh, did I say that right?" and whatnot. You know, c'mon! [Laughter.] And it was just, like, little things like that happened, like, all the time and, you know, kind of made me frustrated with Dartmouth. Like, —yeah.

And, of course, like, using BoredatBaker. Like, stuff like that happens a lot just because it's a small group and, like, those instances kind of like pop out, and it can be frustrating, even though, like, I try not to take that stuff, like, too seriously. But I think that—especially after, like, the Dimensions protests and just seeing, like, people being just very over-the-top angry about—about just other students expressing their discontent with the school and, like, their own personal experiences.

And I understand, like, loving Dartmouth and wanting to—you don't want to have—if it hasn't been your experience, obviously you want to say, like, you know, "Oh, it's not like that," you know. But I think that made me, like, very aware of, like, how—just how some people sort of—I'm trying to, like, choose my words carefully. [Laughs.] I guess, like, some people just, like, really delude themselves into, like, believing that because their experience has been positive, that is what the campus experience is and if you do not subscribe to that experience, then you are a dissenter and

you are really trying to bring the college down, and [chuckles]—that’s, just, like, very—that was really kind of, like, shocking to me and, like, kind of left, like, a bad taste in my mouth under that whole thing.

WOMICK: But they’re devaluing our diplomas!

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: [Laughs.]

WAUGH: But I kept hearing that. And I was just, like, *Really?* [Laughter.]

WOMICK: Yeah.

WAUGH: I think that—you know, that response is what shocked me the most and let me be very sad [chuckles] that I, like, went to school with people who honestly believed that and thought that they were, you know, doing something good by trying to silence other people.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Yeah.

So how would you say that the Dartmouth community has changed, if it has, during your time here?

WAUGH: I guess because I haven’t been—I just had, like, a very small, like, part [chuckles] in, like, the community, and I just don’t really—I haven’t *felt* any changes on campus. Yeah. I feel like everything is—I think it would be kind of stupid to say everything is exactly the same, but I just haven’t felt, like, any waves in, like, campus climate or anything like that.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Nothing big.

WAUGH: No.

WOMICK: What about you? How do you think being at Dartmouth has changed you?

WAUGH: I think it’s made me very aware of my own—my strengths and weaknesses, obviously. Before coming here, I was always kind of like—because, like, people labeled me as,

like, being very quiet and, like, shy and everything, I was always, like, *You know, that's just me. Like, that's just what everybody thinks of me, so that's what I am.* And I think just, like,—just kind of like—[Sighs. Laughs.] Going through, like, the hard parts of my experience and using counseling at one point and just kind of talking it out with somebody, like, made me realize that it's, like, I'm not just, like, this label of, you know, somebody who doesn't speak, and, like, I'm more than that, and if I push myself I can be more than that. And I think I just limited myself before then, so I think Dartmouth changed me in that way. And it just made me aware of these—[Sighs.]—I don't want say problems because they're not problems; like, everybody, like, deals with these kinds of things. But it just, like, made me very aware of, like, my emotions and how to deal with it, so I think that was a good thing. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: And you think it's been a supportive environment for that?

WAUGH: Initially, like, when I first, like, went to see, like, Dartmouth counseling, I thought it was, like, really lame and it didn't help me at all. [Laughs.] I went back again and saw a different counselor, and it was a lot more supportive. And so I guess it's kind of hit or miss.

WOMICK: Mm-hm.

WAUGH: It could obviously be a lot better. [Laughs.] It's kind of annoying to see somebody and talk to somebody and then be told that, you know, "Oh, well, you're probably gonna have to start paying for this" or, like, whatever. And, like, not being able to afford it, so what do you do? But overall, I think there's been—with Dick's House, like, I've had a good experience—like, a fairly good experience with talking to people about my issues. [Chuckles.]

WOMICK: Yeah.

So who would you say does make up the Dartmouth community, if there is such a thing?

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughs.] It's just, like, hard for me to, like, say there's, like, a hu—I always consider, like, Dartmouth just being, like, a bunch of, like, little—it's like the little relationships you

build with, like, everybody here. I don't consider it to be, like, a full community of, like, everybody supporting one other. I just don't think that exists here, personally.

And I think that, in life, it's like that as well. Like, you'd like to believe that, you know, you could turn to, like, anybody and, like, have, like, a certain level of support from them, even if you don't really know them. But it's really the relationships that you spend time building with certain people that create your own community, and I think that's what happens on campus—like, whether it's, like, a sports team or an academic team or whatever. Like, you build those little relationships, and that becomes your community.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Yeah. And for you that's been fencing?

WAUGH: Yeah. [Laughs.]

WOMICK: Do you want to talk about that group some?

WAUGH: Yeah, sure. I'm really not an athletic person at all. [Chuckles.] Like [chuckles], I have, like, really poor hand-eye coordination. Like, I have just, like—every single sport that I've ever done, like, I really sucked at. But when I came here freshman year, I was, like, *Oh, I'm gonna try something different [chuckles] and like go out there—like, put myself out there.* And so I saw this flier for fencing in my Hinman box, and it was, like, *Okay, I'll go to, like, the informational session.* It was just really cool.

And from there, like, I just never looked back. There was a '10 on the team who—there was one day where they, like, kind of did this, like, “hazing” thing [chuckles], where you have to, like,—there's, like, this really insane, like, long run that you had to do outside, and I was, like, really out of shape, and I was, like, dead last. And I remember she stayed behind, and she ran with me, and she was just really encouraging. And I was, like, *Okay, no matter what, I'm gonna be, like, on her squad.* And I ended up being on her squad. She was just, like, a really supportive person and a really strong female presence on the team.

And after that, I knew I wanted to be—I wanted to be with her, and I also wanted to be that for incoming people to the team, and I thought that was really important.

Like, as with anything else, like, with the fencing team I've had [chuckles], like, ups and downs, with, like,—you know, new captains come in, and they have, like, a different leadership style that, like, I've not always agreed with, but overall it's been, like, a very supportive environment for, like, tons of different types of people.

Before, it used to be, like, hardly anybody was, like, really affiliated. If they were, it was, like, just a few people, and then it would be, like, a mix of, like, fraternities, sororities and co-eds as well. And now it's kind of like changed, and, like, now the majority of the team is affiliated, and it's just—it seems like—it's very open, and you can be whoever you want to be when you're on the team.

WOMICK: Yeah. That's cool.

WAUGH: Yeah.

WOMICK: You also mentioned BoredatBaker earlier. Would you like to talk about that?

WAUGH: Sure. I think, yeah, it was—sophomore year is when I started using BoredatBaker. I don't even remember, like, where I heard about it, but I did. [Laughs.] And then I started using it, and for me, like, internet and message boards and things had always been, like, part of my life because being somebody who's not super outgoing, it's really easy to, like, go online and, you know, use that—use the anonymity to be, like, more outgoing in a certain way, so I think BoredatBaker, like, helps me express things that maybe in my day to day I'm not able to, like, talk about.

When I was going through a hard time senior year and, like, before, like, I was able to, like, talk to people online about it, and it was really helpful. So, yeah, I know that it's,—like, on campus it's seen as, like, a very horrible thing [chuckles], but generally I haven't had that experience. Obviously, there are times where I'm, like, *Okay, I have to, like, step away from this right now [laughter] and, like, just take a break for, like, a*

week because I can't deal with it. But, I don't know, just for me it's been, like, a largely positive experience. Yeah, I've met great people [laughs] through BoredatBaker. [Laughter.]

WOMICK: How would you describe the BoredatBaker community and how that compares to the Dartmouth community at large?

WAUGH: I've always seen, like, BoardatBaker as, like, not representative of, like the stereotypical Dartmouth community of, like, you know,—I don't know, I always see BoredatBaker as kind of like—maybe like a fringe element [laughs] of the Dartmouth community. [Laughs.] It just seems like there's more people who are—whereas the Dartmouth community is, like, very—everyone is, like,—like, a majority of the people are affiliated, and they go out all the time, and, you know, they're very athletic and always, like, running outside and blah, blah, blah. And, like, I feel like BoredatBaker is, like, kind of beneath that façade of, like, what should be.

And you see that there are people who are, like,—I feel like most—I had never interacted with people who had been in co-eds before, like really in my day-to-day life, but on BoredatBaker, like, I was able to talk to more people who were in those co-eds and more people who were unaffiliated and just—even with people who *were* affiliated and maybe did have that, like, perfect Dartmouth experience, you see that they are still having the same issues as everybody else on campus.

And it was just like, very nice that without—like, when you're anonymous you're able to, like, say—which can be good or bad [chuckles]—you're able to say, like, what's truly on your mind. And when you're able to do that, I feel like you're able to relate to people better sometimes, because you don't have to put on, like, airs about, like, what's going on.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Yeah. Pretty cool. That's what I've found to be the case as well.

I guess, with all of your accumulated Dartmouth wisdom [chuckles], what advice would you give to people who are maybe considering coming to Dartmouth or even already committed to come here but not yet here?

WAUGH: I would say 1) don't worry about not knowing what you want to do [chuckles] with your life. And I feel like a lot of people say that, but they come in, and they're, like, *Oh, my God! I have to, like,*—it can be overwhelming with, like, the D-Plan and everything and planning out your schedules, something like, *Okay, this is what I want to do. I'm gonna be, like, pre-med and, like, plan all my classes.* You really do have a long time to figure out what you want to do, so don't stress out about it, is, like, what I would say.

And also don't worry about comparing yourself to others. Like, you think—you may think that you're the only person struggling in the class but you're not. [Laughs.] And it's really important not to let yourself get bogged down with, like, negative thoughts and thinking that because—thinking that you're the only one struggling and because you're the only one struggling, you can't reach out because it's gonna make you look stupid. I would say, like, don't be afraid of using all of the resources that are available to you on campus if you *are* having a hard time, and that could be, you know, Academic Skills Center, or it could be, you know, Dick's House counseling. Like, don't be afraid to reach out and do that.

WOMICK: Mm-hm. Terrific.

[Whispers]: Let's see...other things?

How would you say that Dartmouth's location impacts everything?

WAUGH: I don't know. I know that [laughs], like, when I was choosing colleges, I knew that I didn't want to be in Florida because it's, like, way too hot, so I was just really, like,—New England. I just wanted to be there because, like, *Oh, my God! Snow, and it's gonna be cold!*

I think that—I don't know. I don't know if it, like, influences attitudes about certain things. I think that—[Sighs.] Because, like, it's so isolated, I think maybe that's a lot of the reason why people gravitate to the Greek community because if you're not hanging out there, it's harder to find a space or certain activities to do outside of that system. Like, we're not

a huge campus that has, like, a city that you can go out to and, like, find other activities, so—I mean, unless you want to just, like, run up and down Main Street a couple of times on your Saturday night [chuckles], like, you're gonna end up gravitating to a sorority or fraternity and parties like that. So I think that kind of limits students in a certain way, and you feel like—like, / felt that, that I had to rush, like, sophomore year or I wasn't going to have a life. [Laughs.] So I think that is what happens because of our location, because there's not really a lot of stuff around.

And if you don't have, like, a sense of—if you don't have, like, a strong subset friends or something, you're not going to automatically think, like, *Oh, let's go hiking together on a weekend* or something. You're gonna feel like there's nothing for you to do, and it might, like, bring you down, so I think that's kind of, like, a negative aspect to being alone in the wilderness. [Laughter.]

WOMICK: Yeah. Yeah.

I think that just about covers all of the structured questions that we have, but is there anything we haven't talked about yet that you think we should, that you'd like to add? I know—I mean, there's so much to Dartmouth—

WAUGH: [Laughs.] Hmm. I can't think of anything else. [Pause.] Yeah. I don't think so. [Chuckles.]

WOMICK: Okay. Well, thank you for takin' the time to do this.

WAUGH: Sure.

WOMICK: I'm gonna turn these off.

[End of interview.]