

Jean Alexander Kemeny
First Lady of Dartmouth, Emerita

An Interview Conducted by

Jane Carroll

and

Chris Burns

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Jean Alexander Kemeny Interview

INTERVIEW: Jean Kemeny
INTERVIEWED BY: Jane Carroll
PLACE: Kemeny home
Etna, New Hampshire
DATE: June, 1996

KEMENY: ...since John died, I have sort of kept that part of my life here and I have had to start sort of a new life, so I haven't thought about some of these things so I am sure that there will be a lot that I forget or would want to expound on more later.

CARROLL: We can see this almost as a chance to just jog your memory about different events.

KEMENY: Sure. Sure.

CARROLL: Just to get you thinking. What I wanted to start asking you is about your meeting with John Kemeny because I read your book and I was fascinated by this very tumultuous meeting that you had with him. Will you describe it? [Laughter]

KEMENY: Well, I went to Smith and I went to a very tiny high school. I mean, my parents were very well educated, but I went to a tiny high school where let's say I didn't get enough French and I didn't get enough "X" and "Y" and "Z", but I did make it to Smith. First person ever to go to Smith, or really an Ivy League/Seven Sisters school and I had had a good friend who was at Smith already. I wasn't going to go to Smith. I wanted to go to something like Northwestern. I needed a city, but I got a scholarship from the Smith Club of Portland, Maine, and so I went to Smith.

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And I had this very good friend who was very involved with the United World Federalists and I had been involved with the Federalists and my parents had...everybody. Anybody who was right thinking at that time just thought the United Nations should have some power and so I went to Smith. About half way through my freshman year, I belonged to the United World Federalists at Smith and there was the big conference at Princeton and we were to go down and meet with the Princeton men and talk. And so we went in somebody's car...one of my older kids at Hubbard House...girls at Hubbard House...and we went and there were a whole lot of us. Most of us were not used to a big city, so when we went to New York City, we definitely did gawk and look around and dawdle and we got to Princeton Junction, where we were going to meet the Princeton people, and we did not know that we would be put up at professors' houses and it was two or three in the morning and it was awful. We were met by this man who said, "God damn it, Nonie..." [That's my friend.] And the God damn was because how was he going to wake up these poor professors and I thought he was just awful.

So I had my eye out on another one, a Princeton senior. This one I realized was an instructor. I mean, he was way, way beyond the first one, who was blond and cute, etc.; but this other man sort of took a shine to me and, by the end of the weekend, I decided he was nice, after all, and then he came up to Smith and back and forth and we were engaged within three or four months. Everybody said, "You are Cinderella." And, in a way, I was because I was nineteen and I had just turned twenty when I got married and we were going to go to Princeton, which was a seat of great learning, and many of his friends were elderly professors. You know, meeting Einstein was a great, rather awe-inspiring occurrence. So that's essentially how I met him.

CARROLL: What did your parents think of you marrying at such a young age?

KEMENY: Well, I don't think I cared what they thought. [Laughter] I didn't really ask them. It was a fait accompli, I guess. And I think they were fascinated with the idea of living in an academic atmosphere.

CARROLL: When I look at you two, you seem to be such opposites.

KEMENY: Oh, we are. We were.

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CARROLL: So what attracted you to him?

KEMENY: He was brilliant and funny. He was very funny and, as somebody wrote to me after he died, a girl who dated him...I got the most fascinating letters from people. She said, "He was full of life with the weight of the world on his shoulders." That is an absolutely marvelous statement. It is absolutely true. He just had this vision of doing things and he was unlike any other person I have ever met. I think he had one of the greatest minds. He once, not with humility, said that there are only two people he ever had come in contact with who had better minds than he. One was John von Neuman, who was a fantastic Hungarian mathematician, who was a Renaissance man, an amazing mathematician, worked on the atomic bomb, had a great deal to do with the first computer machine, etc. And Albert Einstein was the other one. Really and truly, John had a fantastic mind and, more importantly, he was an abstract person in that he could do the mathematics that were out there somewhere. At the same time, he was a fantastic administrator, a fantastic teacher, and cried at movies. [Laughter] I am quite serious. He had a big sentimental boyish streak to him.

CARROLL: A human side.

KEMENY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

CARROLL: Now, what was Princeton like back at that time. It was what? The '50's?

KEMENY: Yeah. It is funny. I see cars of that era now and I think how they look ancient. We lived...Princeton was really considered one of the best universities in the world at that time. Many green spaces. They have since built a great deal of stuff on campus. I was in a funny position. I was married to a man who almost immediately became an assistant professor, so he was no longer an instructor. We still lived in this project, which were old barracks. They are still there. I mean, they literally are still there. This is forty-five, forty-six years since. Yeah. Well, they have held together, sort of, and I would have to dinner two very famous philosophers when I was twenty.

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How do I want to put this? I just was pulled...not "pulled" because I was interested...but I was immersed into meeting people who are now called "legends". Not just Einstein, but scientists and philosophers and thinkers. It was marvelous for me. By osmosis, I...here I was educated, but...

CARROLL: It was your education.

KEMENY: Of course. It was. It really was. And I think I learned a hell of a lot. I think I learned more than maybe if I had...I hate to say this...stayed at Smith and got my diploma.

CARROLL: I think you are probably right.

KEMENY: And that life no longer exists. The great legends, in a way, have disappeared; because, at that time, there were still worlds to conquer, and there are worlds to conquer, but at that time there were enormous abstract, ideas and now things are more specialized and they are little building blocks. I don't know if you understand this. I don't know that I understand this. [Laughter]

CARROLL: I think I do. It is very well put. I understand that. We have become so specialized that is it the big picture that is missing.

KEMENY: That's right. That's right. At that time, the big picture was constantly being painted.

CARROLL: How did you feel, as a twenty-year-old, entertaining these people? Were you at ease with this?

KEMENY: Yeah. I can't believe that I was, but I was. Yeah. I get along with people and I don't feel...I should sometimes, I think...but I don't feel stepped on. I don't feel that I don't have something to contribute. I am sure that I said stupid things; but I think I said intelligent things also. And, as soon as you start saying intelligent things, people will treat you as intelligent, which snowballs. No. I really wasn't inhibited. I don't know why. I really don't know why. John always supported me. He was really my backbone. No. That's not quite right. I knew he was there always, which is a wonderful feeling.

CARROLL: How did [President John Sloan] Dickey ['29] come to know John Kemeny?

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KEMENY: Well, he knew him through the fact that his Dean of the Faculty was looking for a person to run the mathematics department. It had sort of fallen down hill. There was nobody really to lead it and so Don [Donald] Morrison, who was a government professor and had been made, at a very young age, thirty-something...was delegated to go out and look--I think it was less delegated than Don Morrison delegated himself. You know, he took the pick and let it be known that he was interested in someone to come up and head this department and make it into a good one. He came to Princeton and, unbeknownst to us, he had already seen the head of the mathematic department. I have forgotten what his name was...Solomon Lefschetz, maybe. It doesn't matter. And he had seen Einstein already. So, when he said to John, "I'd like to meet you and persuade you to come to Dartmouth." And John said, "But I'm here. I've got my life planned," or something like that. This was out of the blue. Then he said to me, "Where is Dartmouth?" [Laughter] So Don Morrison had done his homework upside down and backwards. John was, at that point, twenty-seven. We were invited to come up to Dartmouth in early 1953 and, at that point, John met John Dickey. Okay. So John Dickey wasn't "in on it", but Don Morrison said "This is the person." And it was. It was wonderful. It was "Thank God."

CARROLL: Did you...talking with your husband...what made you decide to come up here and leave behind a whole life at Princeton?

KEMENY: Because he was given a free hand and, after all, I was born in New Hampshire and raised in Maine...born in Vermont and raised in Maine. I mean, New Jersey has a nice part, but it has an awful part and, to get to Princeton, you have to go through Rahway, New Jersey. [Laughter] Anyway, we had even planned to have a house, but this was intriguing, more than intriguing. It was very, very exciting and I was excited about it.

CARROLL: So you were positive about this.

KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah.

CARROLL: When you came here, what was Dartmouth and what was Hanover like in 1953?

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KEMENY: Well, it was much more quiet. The students went home for the summer. So summer was a blissful vacation. John Dickey took the whole summer off and went up to his camp up at Lake Champlain, north of St. Albans. It was very easy going. It was definitely a male school and nobody thought anything else but it should be. Everything closed up in the evenings. I mean, really closed up. There were no parking meters, no stop lights.

None of us were paid very much. The couples sort of would babysit for each other, which finally we gave up because it was too boring. [Laughter] I mean, we were all...I think he made four thousand or five thousand dollars. I mean, you have to multiply it by the cost of living now, but still it was not much. We made friends with a lot of people our own age but also, as I told you earlier, with a lot of people, mostly faculty, who were a lot older. At that time, let's say they were forty-five and that was over forty years ago, so they are ancient and many of them are no longer living. Most of my friends that I made at that point are retired now, because I am sixty-six...almost sixty-six. So I have lived here for forty-two years.

CARROLL: That's a long time to be in one place although the natives probably still call you a "new comer".

KEMENY: Oh, I don't think so any more. [Laughter] Although there was a cute tenth anniversary [celebration] of John being President and, not only did people at the college speak, but some people from the town--some of the town leaders. One of them got up, [James] Jim Campion, and gave this very cute talk...it is on tape somewhere...but he said at the end, "You will never be a townie, John." [Laughter]

CARROLL: What he is talking about definitely leads me to my next question. Here is a man who is not attracted to the out-of-doors, who is a very intelligent and very intellectual being, coming up to the wilds of New Hampshire. What do you think...

KEMENY: Well, it used to be he would say that he wanted to know, when he lived in New York, near New York City, "How far is it from Times Square?" It was very important to know that. Number two, he was never going to have a lawn. He would paint cement green. [Laughter] After a few years here, he absolutely adored it and he hated to go to New York. Absolutely. It just caught him and he

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realized what it was like to live in a place with clean air and beauty. I understand. He really adored to go to the Times Square and see the double-features or the quadruple features and we would eat chestnuts up in the balcony; but New York changed very much, as you obviously know, and it no longer held the charm for him. He, in time, became in love with this area.

CARROLL: So he never regretted his decision to leave the city.

KEMENY: Oh, never did. No, no, no. I mean there was a time, at some point, when people began to offer him jobs away and jobs that...he needed some clout to do things in education and the only way he could get clout was to be a provost or a president. So...I was not happy. [Laughter] He was not happy either because he really didn't want to go. He absolutely had no idea that they would choose him here. It was his biggest wish, his biggest dream.

And, look, he was a foreigner in many ways, in all kinds of ways. And I will give you a little taste of this. When Dave [David] McLaughlin ['54] was made President, there were little innuendoes and also more so, "He is one of us." I mean, you can take that any way you want to, but I took it and I was furious. I mean, this came back to us. But...just some alumni I think...

CARROLL: When John Kemeny came here, there were very few Jews in the area.

KEMENY: Yes. And he wasn't a Jew as a Jew. He was born a Jew, but he just wasn't...didn't... He didn't believe in anything as far as 'up there' or around. But he heard stories of the quotas that had been placed by [President Ernest Martin] Hopkins ['01] and he certainly didn't choose a friend because he was a Jew. Yes, there were some Jews, but there weren't probably a lot. I don't think we ever thought about it that way. It's funny.

CARROLL: That's interesting. You didn't; but when he was chosen President, was there ever any kind of feelings of anti-Semitism?

KEMENY: No. Not that we knew of. I would later run into them from people who didn't even know that they were anti-Semites.

CARROLL: That's interesting.

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KEMENY: Oh, I told you the story...it was in my book, I think. The wife of trustee who said something about her town, which is outside of Boston, and too many of them are moving in. To me...and I said, "This woman. She must know." You know, but, you see, I was one of...I was with her. I was a WASP and, of course, I would understand what she meant and, of course, she never thought. But I met that all of the time.

CARROLL: I want to get back to when you came here as a faculty wife, you had quickly two small children and a husband who had devoted himself to reforming the math department.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: How did you keep sane?

KEMENY: I didn't. [Laughter] No. No. But I am quite serious. I was exhausted and I would try to take a nap. I finally put a little bolt on the kids' door when they were taking naps, so I could take a nap, so I knew that they were at least in there. It probably did horrible things to them later, their psyche. We literally didn't have anybody to leave them with. I just didn't have babysitters, except for sometimes in the evening and they were nurses, if you were lucky. But you had to get somebody at night. You could not get them during the daytime and there literally was no place. And I was very tired.

At that time, some men...particularly my husband...did not bother himself by changing the diapers. He learned to do some cooking for me, which was very sweet. But he had been brought up in an old-world tradition. I mean, it just never occurred to him. And, in a way, it never occurred to me either because nobody else did it very much. Now I see my son and my son-in-law being extra mommies. It's fabulous. But I really was tired and I didn't have much time to do anything.

CARROLL: That sort of changed though. I noticed that you were very active in the...

KEMENY: Oh, yes. And in politics...in Democratic politics. But I think, as I said in the book, these were things in a chunk, but then they

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stopped. They were not a continuing really...politics is wonderful when there is going to be an election and, for the six months before and after, you were involved like hell, and then you say, "Well, we did it" and take six deep breaths and don't do it for awhile.

CARROLL: So this was working with the national elections?

KEMENY: No. Well, yeah. I ended up, yes, working for a man who would become a United States Senator. A man who had actually gone to Dartmouth. Thomas McIntyre...I think the Class of '37...who decided to run for the U.S. Senate and the Democrats, at that time, were few and far between. At least you were not registered as a Democrat. You might register as a Republican because that gave you a voice as to which of the best Republicans you can put up. So. Yes. Since he was not very well known, he didn't have a hell of a lot of help and so I was chosen to be his so-called campaign manager in the area and I would go to Dartmouth and give talks to the students about the state of New Hampshire politics and to talk about the Democrats, of which there wasn't too much to say, but to tell them what a weird state they were living in, etc. And then I would send them to Littleton to pass out brochures, etc., etc., and there was a very small scale operation. And, by God, Tom McIntyre won. So here we were, all excited as hell, and he was indebted to us and that was a lot of fun. It really was a lot of fun. He was a very good Senator and grew in the job. He was a conservative who did a good job. So it was fun.

CARROLL: Your husband had been on the school board at one point?

KEMENY: Yes. In the early 60's. He ran for the school board. The first time, he got beaten by six or seven votes. At that time, you didn't do any electioneering. It was not done; so the next year, there was going to be a vacancy. Two people were running and Frank Smallwood, who was a professor of government also, decided...he lived in Norwich, but he decided that John needed a campaign manager. So they turned everything upside down. There was a little ad in the paper. Oh, my goodness. This had not been done, but it was being done and John won and John became a superb...he wasn't chairman. He was vice chairman, I guess, of the school board. I mean, he would get the town to vote a budget that nobody thought could get through because he had a very wonderful way of getting down to the issues and making them understandable.

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His greatest coup was to go to Norwich which, at that time, was thinking about or was already in the Dresden school district, which, as you know, the combined district of Hanover and Norwich, which had never been done. Trying to get something through and all the guys and the women came out from the hills. People you never saw. "Aye, yup." You know. And here is this guy with this accent. Oh, my god. He got them. He just had a way of making things clear and logical and understandable. "Of course, we should do it this way," he would say, optimistically.

CARROLL: It sounds as though he never doubted the force of his own intellect.

KEMENY: He didn't at all. Some people would say that he probably should have humility; but John would say, "I never have humility."
[Laughter]

CARROLL: I like that. That's a good quality. John was so involved with computers. Were you at all a part of that?

KEMENY: Not really. I was interested in it. Actually, we were all in the forefront of the computer age. I remember in the late 50's, going down with Tom Kurtz and his wife, the four of us went down to the Boston area and picked up a computer. It was called the L.G.P. 30. It was tiny. At that time, tiny meant that it didn't do much. It couldn't do much, but it was our first computer. Then we expanded and expanded and expanded until we had rooms full of refrigerators. That's when computers were doing a lot. But now, a personal computer can do as much as those roomfulls and they are back to being small again.

John never was interested in the hardware. He was interested in the software, the language. How could he make the language easy and understandable, and yet very powerful? That's when he and Tom Kurtz and some students devised the language BASIC...

CARROLL: That was the language I learned.

KEMENY: Really. Well, there became a problem when IBM and the Microsoft grabbed it, you see, it was in the public domain. They made no money out of it. Dartmouth made no money out of it. They bastardized the language, so I don't know whether you got the good

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language or the bad language. So later on, after the presidency, John and Tom's people made a new language out of BASIC called True BASIC, which meant that this was the real...But these things, you can get from Tom Kurtz. I don't know whom you are talking to.

CARROLL: He will certainly be one of them. I haven't talked with him yet.

KEMENY: Okay.

CARROLL: I saw in your book, there is a picture of John Kemeny sitting in his study with your two children, working on a small computer.

KEMENY: Oh, that's not in the book; but, yes.

CARROLL: I have seen it...

KEMENY: That was an early...it wasn't really a personal computer. It was tied into the big machine at Dartmouth.

CARROLL: It was a timeshare.

KEMENY: Yes. Right. Good for you. Yes. Jenny, the first born...51 weeks earlier than the second, her brother...said, when she was in about the sixth or seventh grade, "I'm not going to do anything with computers. I am not going to have anything to do with computers." She changed. She changed her mind. She is a very, very, very intelligent girl and a nice girl. In fact, my kids are very nice and very...Robbie is a late bloomer like I am and he is...it was awfully hard being a son of John Kemeny.

CARROLL: I was wondering about that.

KEMENY: It was hard.

CARROLL: They both chose to go to Dartmouth.

KEMENY: Yeah. But, for example, Rob never took the simplest mathematics...he didn't take one mathematics course at Dartmouth on principle; particularly because the course was frequently taught by Bill Sloenick who is a very powerful speaker and knows who and who not in the class and Rob was just embarrassed. He didn't want

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to do badly and John nearly killed him. Later...no, not for that. But Rob was talking about some problem at work. He said, "You know how good I am at mathematics, Daddy." [Laughter] John said, "No kidding." Because he would help him take pre-S.A.T.s. How would he do and he would say that he was absolutely wonderful on solving. He just wasn't very good when it was posed...when the question was posed as to how to interpret it. So that was his problem. So, anyway, Rob is a late bloomer and is doing very well. They both are intelligent and very nice. I am very proud of my children. I don't know if I had that much to do with it, but..

CARROLL: Indirectly, at least.

KEMENY: Would you like some lunch?

CARROLL: I'll tell you what. Let's go until this pops up and then we will take a break.

KEMENY: Okay. Fine. Good.

CARROLL: What I am curious about is were you at all aware that the trustees were considering your husband to become President.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Only because we had some lines, spies into the faculty part of the search committee. Among them were Don Kreider, John Copenhaver [Jr. '46] and John Finch ['52] who is retired and not living here anymore. Who was the fourth? And I know that it was these people...probably Copenhaver and Kreider...I think it is important to ask them if you have a chance...that really switched the trustees' thinking. They were trying to go outside and get fancy types. There was a little maneuvering the faculty around and, once in a while, there was a play-by-play of what was going on. We did not think he had a chance. There were some very interesting names up. I literally don't remember who they were anymore, from outside. That...

[End of Tape 1, Side A -- Beginning of Tape 1, Side B]

KEMENY: The trustees of the faculty committee went all over the country looking and they also were delighted to see that Dartmouth was thought of well, more so than they had thought because of the so-called...the picture some people had of it being a complete animal

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house, which it wasn't. I mean, the teaching was excellent, etc., which has been proved to be so. Anyway and that was always John's goal...was to have it be a terrific teaching college. It is really a university. So, anyway, yes. It was a long search. I know they were all over. I haven't thought of this for a long time. I know we were not constantly updated, but sometimes little things would come out, so...Number one, yes, he knew he was a candidate. Number two, that he knew that he was on a short list, but it wasn't until I answered the phone at Christmas time and it was the chairman of the board...he wanted to speak to John...that we knew something was up. And, also, I think I wrote this, but the night of this very enormous celebration. What was it?

CARROLL: The Two Hundredth Anniversary.

KEMENY: The Two Hundredth Anniversary...that the chairman of the board had walked beside me as we were going in and he said, "We had a very interesting discussion with your husband this afternoon." So, all of these little things...

CARROLL: Began to point the way.

KEMENY: Began to point the way.

CARROLL: While this was happening, you must have been talking with your husband constantly.

KEMENY: Oh. Yes. But not terribly much because it was almost beyond a dream. It was...

CARROLL: How old was he at this time?

KEMENY: He was forty-three.

CARROLL: That is so young.

KEMENY: I know, but, you know, he died so-called "young", but he probably had more lifetimes than people who live to be ninety and a hundred and two hundred. Whatever. Yeah. He would be forty-four at the end of May of that year, and he took office the first of March.

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CARROLL: Did you have any negatives about accepting it when you talked with him?

KEMENY: No. I didn't, except I didn't know what I was supposed to do.

CARROLL: Oh. That would be tough...

KEMENY: Well, Mrs. Dickey...I think I wrote about it in the book...that I couldn't go over to see her because we were supposed to keep this very quiet. I did have a lot of questions. The other thing was that I was coming in as the President's wife about the time things were going to shift as far as the role of a woman or role of a wife. Mrs. Dickey was a very nice person, really terribly sweet; but she was more the hostess type and a good one and I can't remember if she went on alumni trips or not. I don't know that for sure. So that is what I saw. I didn't see a woman, a wife, a first lady, talking a lot, being involved a lot, thinking up things and plotting with her husband. [Laughter] I really don't know why that came up, but I think sometimes that was true.

CARROLL: Were you worried that you would be stifled by this role or did you think you could make something of it?

KEMENY: I wasn't worried that I would be stifled because somehow I've never worried about that. I have never been stifled in a way. I do. I blabber on. [Cat enters room with mouse] Yes. You have a lovely mouse. You caught it. You capture it. Good boy. Good boy.]

CARROLL: Good job.

KEMENY: He has to tell me about the terrible tussle. You know, I watch these cats. Over there, there is a basket on the floor and, in it, are their mice and things and they will look around and they will go over and they will play around and pick something and then run to the bedroom and say, "Look what I caught. It was a terrible tussle." It is very funny. What was I talking about?

CARROLL: You were talking about would you be stifled in this role.

KEMENY: Yeah. And I told you what I thought about that. No. But I really did not know exactly whether there was a blueprint. Was there a blueprint of what I should, could, would do? Oh, I had this great

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[plan] that I would have faculty over and I would run a movie. A special one. Of course, there were no videos. There was no film society. All of these things I was thinking about doing, many of which I did not do; but, more importantly, I guess I think I just did what was comfortable and what came naturally somehow.

CARROLL: Now you were in Boston when you got the news that he had been elected.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: When you came back home, did your children know already. Did you break the news...

KEMENY: Well, we had a little code. They were off skiing in Vermont and we said if they answered the phone and we said "Happy New Year", they would know that it had come true. So they answered the phone, we said "Happy New Year" and they said "It isn't New Year's." [Laughter] So, all right. I think I told my father. My mother would have died by that time and I told one friend. I did. But it was very strange. I was singing in a new...this was an amateur thing. It wasn't a Dartmouth thing, a musical, and I had to tell them at some point because I just couldn't do the part anymore. I left that as late as possible. It's hard to remember now. It's either catching me...I was very ill. I got...no. That was later. It was just a flu. It doesn't matter. It's not important. But those six weeks between the time he was elected and the time he took office were hectic as hell.

CARROLL: You had to pack up and move.

KEMENY: We didn't have to move immediately. No. Thank God we didn't have to move until mid-summer so there was time there. In fact, a number of things that happened on campus as far as Kent State, Cambodia, all that stuff, the students would come to our house, which was out of town a little bit. We were not in the President's House at that point. No. Thank God. We didn't have to move. I couldn't have done it. Besides it needed painting. It hadn't been re-done for forty years or so. The trustees said, "Go ahead." So I did. [Laughter]

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CARROLL: Do you remember what your children's reactions were when they found out that their father was going to be President?

KEMENY: They were excited for him, obviously, and I don't think they really thought out what it would mean in their lives. They had, at least a year earlier, when there was a remote possibility...probably not even that...that he possibly might be on the list, they had dressed up in these costumes of an Indian and a tiger. They were talking about John G., the Princeton tiger and the Dartmouth Indian. At that time, it was okay to use that and that he was being thought for the presidency, it was a poem they wrote. So they knew about it and I really don't think... Let's see. Jenny was fifteen, [born in] 1954. She was fifteen and Rob was fourteen. So they were teenagers. Particularly, after they both got to Dartmouth, the ramifications hit even harder. But Jenny had gone to Yale, but absolutely hated it and had gotten mugged in front of President Brewster's house at Yale, so had switched to Dartmouth. But they did not...I don't think any of us knew what it was going to be like. The good and bad.

CARROLL: What was the good and the bad? What was the good?

KEMENY: The good was that it was exceedingly exciting and lots of new ground being broke, lots of ideas floating around, implementing many of those ideas. Being known. [Laughter] I mean, it was a very strange thing for me to be pointed out, you know...whisper...there she is or there he is. In fact, after John was no longer President, that word, "exciting", was what an awful lot of people said, "It's no longer exciting."

Yeah. I think we were in the forefront of a lot of innovations in education. And I say "we" because I honest to God think I helped him on this because we talked about practically everything. Not that he took all that I said all of the time. I think sometimes I definitely helped and I do miss that. I have always missed that.

I do not miss the drudgery of which there was considerable. In fact, I think I have a trauma about being available. I rarely answer the phone. That's in my book. I just don't want to say "I don't want to do it." Not just "I don't want to buy it", but "I don't want to do it." And I think that has held over. I know it held over for John. He

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really wanted to come up here and have peace. He did not want to get involved anymore.

When he retired, he was delighted to retire. He was sick and tired of walking a hell of a long way from his parking place. He was sick and tired of doing ten tons of documentation before teaching a course. But that was afterwards. The drudgery was always being available and always being on your toes.

CARROLL: You live right in the middle of everything.

KEMENY: You live in the middle, but people are always throwing questions at you and, after a while, people were throwing questions at me, the same questions that they were throwing to John. And you want to answer quickly and, at the same time, you want to say "Do I know anything about this?" [Laughter]

CARROLL: When he accepted the job, had you talked among yourselves as to what your job would be or did this evolve?

KEMENY: No. We did not really discuss, as far as I can remember. Now, look, this may hit me at some point. I don't remember sitting down with John and saying "Now what does this entail?" I don't remember doing that. It is possible that we did or that it came out in drips and drabs. It possibly did that. I honest to God don't think we sat down...

I mean it meant that he now had the power to do the things that he had wanted to do and was unable to do before. That we certainly knew. What my role was was not necessarily discussed because I didn't say "Oh, dear, I am scared." I didn't say anything. I just sort of went with the flow; but, at the same time, once it became quite apparent, then I didn't know what the hell...which side of the feminist side I was going to be on...because, literally, feminism was just starting.

CARROLL: You were right in the middle of it.

KEMENY: Absolutely. Absolutely.

CARROLL: My roommate from college married a Dartmouth man, Class of '74, and I was talking with him about that time on campus and he

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said...the first thing he said was "Jean Kemeny was a presence, just like her husband." [Laughter] Did you set out to be that?

KEMENY: No. No. No. It evolves and, as I said to you earlier, if people listen, then you do more of it and then it became very natural. I was part of the Presidency.

CARROLL: I always say that they got two for one when they got you.

KEMENY: Two for the price of one. That's what I was going to call the book, but...[Laughter] I only called one chapter that.

CARROLL: What was your favorite part of being the First Lady?

KEMENY: Part of the fun was meeting people, meeting interesting people. Part of it was just thinking up interesting things to do, I mean, for the trustees, for whatever. We certainly traveled...all over hell. Of course, half of the places we went to, I never really saw because we were either in our hotel or leaving our hotel or at a meeting. But there is an aura that "There's the President. There's the President's wife." I have to say that some of that is fun.

CARROLL: Did any of the trustees ever complain of the or Alumni complain that you were too visible?

KEMENY: Not to me. I think I have a part in the book about where I go to faculty meetings, which had not been done before. I mean, I had...John had agreed that if they let the Dartmouth and the Dartmouth radio station there and the umpty, umpty secretary of such and such, why couldn't I go. But really, a committee of older faculty went to him and said, "You know, there is somebody here that really shouldn't be here." What was this all about?

CARROLL: About resistance to your being there.

KEMENY: Oh, yeah. And that was quickly overcome. Now, of course, anybody can go to faculty meetings.

CARROLL: Did he convince them to let you go?

KEMENY: No. What he did instead of convincing them, he took it to a committee that was already meeting about something and they

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passed over it and then came out with a ruling that anybody could come. So that was the only...I don't remember anybody feeling, at least to my face or to John's, that I was too outspoken. Maybe among themselves, some of them did. Sure.

CARROLL: Was it hard to change from being a faculty...one of the group...into being the President's wife?

KEMENY: I didn't know that it would be, but it literally, in one minute, it was somehow now that John was the administrator, although he still kept teaching, and administrators are suddenly the enemy. Not that we lost our friends, but he was just seen in a different light. He was an administrator.

CARROLL: Did people watch their words?

KEMENY: No. Not their words, but exactly...no. Not words. I don't know how to put this. Administrators make rulings. Administrators with faculty committees make rulings about the faculty. Administrators are just not faculty anymore and there is a freedom of being a faculty member and that you don't want to be stepped on in any way, shape or form. Therefore, even though he was and still is a faculty member, he is an administrator. Watch out.

CARROLL: Did he sit in on department meetings and in the math department, as well?

KEMENY: Did he sit in on department meetings while he was President? I don't remember. He did teach one or two courses a year, which was unheard of at that time and he said he would catch them saying...

CARROLL: It also kept him in touch with the student body.

KEMENY: Oh, absolutely. Yes. Yes. Yes.

CARROLL: And he kept up with the office hours.

KEMENY: And office hours for students only and there was no time limit. It was first come, first serve and students would want to sit there for an hour on one topic, he or she was allowed to.

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CARROLL: When you first looked at the President's House, what did you think?

KEMENY: I had never seen so many rooms. When I left I said, "Gee, I wish it had more rooms." [Laughter] No, what I really wish was that it had more closets. There were lots and lots and lots of rooms, but... Part of it was that it was poorly planned. There was an enormous room in the basement where you could have big things, but it was very dismal down there, even though we redid it. There was not that much room on the first floor for floating cocktail parties or whatever. There were two rooms that I could use as guest rooms. I had a lot of rooms. It was just that a lot of them were for staff. Down the hall.

CARROLL: Oh, really?

KEMENY: There was a big staff at that time. In fact, literally, there were pearl buttons and in all bedrooms and many of the other rooms so that you pushed a button and something went "boom" in the kitchen and that said "Room so and so wants you. Wants somebody."

CARROLL: What elegant living.

KEMENY: It must have been. But it was built in 1926, or something like that. It is a lovely house. It is well built, but the problems with heating were terrible. There were only two thermostats for the entire house with its twenty, twenty-five rooms and eight or ten bathrooms. I've forgotten. So it wasn't...We did put in a couple of air-conditioners. We tried putting in a dehumidifier but that was another thing. Whatever they bought, it didn't work. There were negatives as far as comfort.

CARROLL: Did you take your own furniture? Did you make it your own?

KEMENY: Well, I took some. I didn't have much furniture, so I was given a budget and I was allowed to have an interior decorator, which I had never used before. She got me into all sorts of places in New York, which I could not have gotten into and we did it for...we redid most of it, which was lots and lots of fun. I had color combinations I had always thought I would love and I did so I would put them in certain periods and redid the kitchen. That was fun because it was really an old-fashioned kitchen and we made it into a really working

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kitchen. At that time, it never occurred to me to have stuff catered because it had not been done before.

CARROLL: Really? Mrs. Dickey did...

KEMENY: Mrs. Dickey and her cook had always done it, so Mrs. Kemeny and the cook and the houseman/gardener and all the people I could round up. We cooked and cooked and cooked. Now, it is all catered. Everything is catered there, which helps. I mean, let's face it. I remember meeting the Chancellor of Berkeley way back. It wasn't Amon. It was somebody way, way back. When John was President, he said to me "Be sure that you have enough help." Well, I didn't have enough help. Also, we were going...it was an austerity time because the stock market hadn't even broken a thousand and fuel prices were a problem.

CARROLL: I was going to ask you about that. There seems to have been almost immediately in '73, a big crisis which was precipitated by the fuel costs.

KEMENY: Fuel costs and the market...below a thousand. There was something else that was a problem. Three problems. I can't remember what the third one was.

So it never occurred to me to try to get more help. It never occurred to me to say, "Hey. I'm overworked. I'm cooking, etc." But there is a good side to this in that I think I learned more about people as I entertained. They had more fun. I put everything in the kitchen on a buffet frequently and they would go around and I would have different dinners from different countries. [Laughter]

CARROLL: It sounds like it was more personal.

KEMENY: Yes. It was personal. Yes. Yes. So that was the good side of it. It created goodwill, I think. But, look, poor Sheba [Bathsheba] Freedman was teaching.

CARROLL: That's right.

KEMENY: It's a little hard.

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- CARROLL: It is. When your husband was inaugurated, I have read all of the reports, it strikes me that it was the biggest party.
- KEMENY: It was. It was. Everybody was so excited.
- CARROLL: Who decided to throw open the doors?
- KEMENY: Oh, that would have been done anyway.
- CARROLL: Really?
- KEMENY: Oh, yes. That would not have been in a closed ceremony. We didn't have a great big inauguration as to inviting the academic big-wigs all over the country. We invited John's favorite math teacher at Princeton. We invited the President of Middlebury because that is where he got his first honorary degree. We invited the President of the University of New Hampshire because it is the University of New Hampshire. I think those were the only outside people. I would have to think back. But, you know, the community came. Of course, students and alumni. But the town.
- CARROLL: The town. That's what strikes me. I think that is great fun. It was really a Dartmouth event.
- KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah.
- CARROLL: In the past, what I was reading, they had done it over the summer when the students weren't around.
- KEMENY: I didn't realize that.
- CARROLL: So you were the first to do it where the students could participate.
- KEMENY: Oh. Oh. Oh.
- CARROLL: I think that is quite special.
- KEMENY: Yes. I am glad that you found that out. I didn't know that.
- CARROLL: When you first started becoming First Lady, do you know what the first task was that you took on for yourself?

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KEMENY: Probably doing this house because I know that I started in late March and he was inaugurated in March, the first of March. It involved a lot of trips down to look at stuff. So that probably was...

And also, I remember the first alumni trip was also in April of that year. We went to Cleveland that first year. [Laughter] And it was still sort of mud season or whatever. Cleveland, at that point, was not...it had some wonderful museums, but it had no place to stay. It had no decent hotels. I remember there was a march of gay rights or something down the streets of Cleveland and I think it was the first one any of us had ever seen and this was just when things got started about gay rights and homosexuality. Of course, there was nothing on campus or on any campus that allowed...it used to be that you would be kicked out of Dartmouth if you were discovered to be homosexual. Oh, sure. And that was true I think in most colleges. I would not be surprised if that wasn't true. You know about the art professor who was kicked out of Smith because he was a homosexual.

CARROLL: Oh, no.

KEMENY: What was his name? He was famous and this was after I left.

CARROLL: [Inaudible] I'm sorry, I don't know.

KEMENY: It wasn't that he preyed on girls. You see, that was just awful. Now, what did I start? What did I do. I went on this trip to Cleveland. I saw this thing.

CARROLL: March.

KEMENY: March. I also saw...that was when Apollo 13 was stuck up in the heavens and we didn't know what was going on. Once in a while, if you went along the street, you saw a t.v. set and everybody was crowded around it. That was where I met a very wealthy alumnus whose wife gave us a big dinner party. She had black live-in servants, you know, who served with one hand behind their backs and, all the time at the dinner table, they were discussing being horribly anti-black. It was awful.

CARROLL: [Inaudible]

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KEMENY: Well, John...I wish I remembered what he did, but he was great. They could hear everything. The staff. I just...

CARROLL: You wonder...had they desensitized themselves to such a degree?

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Or do they even think they are people? I don't know what it was.

CARROLL: Did you ever...how did you come to an agreement with yourself...when you are going out. You are trying to raise money for Dartmouth and you are coming across really impossible people. What do you do?

KEMENY: Sometimes it was like a gentlemen's agreement. If you know that rule, they...and I am ashamed of it. Sometimes it wasn't. Sometimes we would say things. I can't give you quotes. I just have this feeling of remembering that we didn't take it. Most of the time, it was actually not a gentlemen's agreement. It was awful. The insensitivity. Not all people, obviously.

CARROLL: It was a time when the nation was undergoing great changes and that brings me really to coeducation. Was your husband completely committed to this?

KEMENY: Oh, yes. Absolutely. But not...not way back. No. I would say in the late '50's maybe, he felt that there should be more minorities, in general, on campus. Not, say, just women, but more minorities. We would have one black or two blacks in a class. So I don't think he would have pushed for women at that point as much as he would have pushed for more minorities on campus.

But then, once he got committed, he really went full steam ahead and was on a big committee to study this problem. I don't know if you have read this story or whether it is in...or whether I ever wrote it or he wrote it. The night before the vote on coeducation, he came home and he was quite depressed and he normally was not depressed about much. He really always had this optimistic attitude. He said, "I don't think we've got the votes." Does this sound familiar to you?

CARROLL: No.

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KEMENY: And I said, "Okay. Let's write down `yes', `no', `maybe'." So he wrote down...he got some yeses. He got a lot of nos...not a lot, but a number of nos and maybes, he had four or five people and so I began to talk about one person that I felt was very important and I don't know if I should tell you who... Well, I will. It was the Chairman of the Board [Charles Zimmerman '23]. I said, "You have him as a `maybe' or `no'." I said, "I think he could become a `yes'." He said, "Why?" And I said, "Because he told me a story of his daughter who was one of the first women surgeons at Mass. General and the tough, tough time she had with the male doctors." He was terribly upset about what had happened to her. And I said, "I think that will sway him." And, by God, it did.

But, more importantly, you see, he was Chairman of the Board, so it was not only his cast vote, but his ability to persuade some other votes. So that's where I felt I had some input. That was an interesting little sidelight. It was not a unanimous vote. Pro. I know some of the `nos', but there were certainly enough to make it a good majority.

CARROLL: Did President Kemeny lobby some of the people beforehand or did he let them come to their own decisions?

KEMENY: I don't remember. I am sure he had discussions.

CARROLL: Sure.

KEMENY: I just don't remember.

CARROLL: And then it was announced to the alumni.

KEMENY: First of all, they had taken polls and the polls were, I think, more favorable than they expected.

[End of Tape 1, Side B -- Beginning of Tape 2, Side A]

CARROLL: ...about then the vote and the presentation of coeducation to the alumni.

KEMENY: But, you see, as I said, they had taken some polls earlier and, as I remember, the alumni...they seemed...at least they were pleased that there was not a complete and utter rejection of this. Of course,

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I think other questions were asked, too. You would have to check with somebody on this. Some attitudes perhaps to minorities, etc. Perhaps to blacks. You had this feeling, were they actually honest in their responses because you had this feeling sometime, you know, when exit polling, they say one thing but really they did another because they are a little embarrassed to admit it. Yes. And it took a while for a lot of alumni to come around and the alumni wives.

CARROLL: That's what Ruth Adams said. She thought the wives of the older alums were far more intransigent and set against coeducation. Why do you think that was?

KEMENY: Well, I think I wrote this, but I am not sure, I think that somehow the idea of an all-male school is sort of...I think there is sexism in there somewhere. I don't mean sexist exactly. And I used to say this because, if it were coeducational, maybe they wouldn't have been able to get their husbands. [Laughter]

No. There is something there. It isn't just tradition. It is more than that and I don't know if I can actually explain it. I know what I am not saying. Many of the wives were very upset.

CARROLL: Vocally?

KEMENY: Some. Yes. Yes.

CARROLL: Do you know...Ruth Adams remembered vaguely that there had been an incident which she addressed to an alumni group in Albany, but she couldn't remember the details. She said, "Ask Jean Kemeny."

KEMENY: Well, I wasn't there; but John was there and he said that Albany was one of the worst places to go. They were awfully conservative and there was the alumni...the head of the alumni club there who was very anti coeducation and a little later, at sort of a party at his house afterwards, his wife took John aside and said, "Just ignore him. He hates women." [Laughter] Really. This was his wife.

CARROLL: An honest woman.

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- KEMENY: And I never had to go to Albany. I didn't want to go. I didn't go. I never did. Ho. Ho. Ho. Maybe it has changed now. It was not the most liberal club.
- CARROLL: I have read that fundraising dropped initially after coeducation.
- KEMENY: Perhaps it did.
- CARROLL: When did it begin to rebound?
- KEMENY: Don't ask me. I have forgotten. It did rebound. It definitely did rebound.
- CARROLL: I will talk with Alex [Fanelli] anyway.
- KEMENY: I honest to God don't remember. Or George Colton. Is he on your list?
- CARROLL: Yes. Absolutely.
- KEMENY: Okay.
- CARROLL: I want to go back just a little to talk a little bit about your duties as First Lady. What did you do that kept you such a presence that my friend Fred says, you were "there"?
- KEMENY: I don't know. I was there. I went with him on lots and lots and lots of meetings, interviews of students at alumni trips. I talked with the students. I mean, I was there as long as it seemed appropriate. If there was some really special meeting that was sort of 'hush, hush', I didn't go. There was no reason to go.
- CARROLL: Do you think your presence out there helped in recruiting?
- KEMENY: Well, I am sure it did. I dinged Harvard for their teaching.
- CARROLL: Did you?
- KEMENY: Well, it's very true. John said it and it is absolutely true. When you want to see what kind of an education you are going to get, look at the teachers and see how many teach freshmen. Don't look for

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some Nobel Prize winners because they are not going to teach freshmen.

CARROLL: That's right.

KEMENY: And watch out how many graduate students you get as teachers. So I used statistics to prove my point, and of course, I used the environment. A few of the things.

CARROLL: Was it hard to persuade women initially to come here?

KEMENY: No. It wasn't. In fact, we had had as sort of a visiting Twelve College Exchange. Is that what you call it? Okay. And, in order to make it easier for the incoming freshmen women, which would have been in '72, we decided to try to take some from each of the sophomores. It would have been sophomores...the juniors and seniors who were already on the Twelve College Exchange...and we asked for volunteers. Well, practically everyone volunteered. [Laughter] Of course, we had to be a little careful here because, not only were we stealing from all those other colleges which we had not told them we were going to do and had not intended to at that time.

No. There was no problem. I don't know how the...I can't remember exactly. There were lots of nasty stories about what the young men were doing to women. "Cohogs" was one of their...

CARROLL: Cohogs?

KEMENY: Yeah.

CARROLL: In what sense? They called them that?

KEMENY: Well, yes. They would stand on the steps of Dartmouth Hall, what they used to call Hums. I don't know that Hums exists anymore and they would sing rather nasty songs about women on campus. Not all men.

CARROLL: Obviously.

KEMENY: But obviously the problem is that, if there is something nasty going to happen, it makes big noise. So women...although a lot of women

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wanted to go to Dartmouth. Some of them probably rah, rah men type anyway. Rah, rah, rah male Dartmouth, but here I am so I will be a rah, rah boy. But many women who wanted a decent education as a woman to be listened to as a woman, and all the applications looked good.

I don't remember whether they went down after some of the incidents which...some of them got play in the press. But, obviously... I don't remember. I do know that there was a great desire for women to come to Dartmouth.

CARROLL: On the part of the students, too, it seems. The polls that the students...

KEMENY: Absolutely. This single-sex thing is really unnatural. I remember Joseph Losi, who was a famous film director who went to Dartmouth and got an honorary degree in '73, maybe, who loved Dartmouth and was just shaking because he was getting honored. A fascinating man who said, "My whole sex life was ruined because I didn't know about women." I mean, everybody says that just knowing them on the weekend was just the wrong thing to do. He really opened up the feeling that it was so...it was terrible for many men's sex life. They didn't know about women.

CARROLL: Well, they say, of course, the standard line is that women came and civilized Dartmouth. Do you think that is true?

KEMENY: Well, what do you mean by 'civilized'?

CARROLL: Well, that's what I have always wondered. That was my next question.

KEMENY: I don't know. I think they just came and made it much more of a natural environment. I don't necessarily think that is civilized. Does that mean that...

CARROLL: Perhaps fewer food fights? I don't know.

KEMENY: A lot of women would get drunk. A lot of women tried to act like men in many ways. And they weren't lesbians, etc. They just wanted to fit in and, at that time, it was one of the ways to fit in. Civilizing means perhaps letting men show their feminine side or I

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don't know what. Sure. I think that's happened and the majority of males are pals with women. They really are. I think it's doing very well. I think it is now up to 50/50, actually.

CARROLL: Actually, this is the first year where there has been more women than men admitted.

KEMENY: Wow. Good. And the alumni aren't screaming and tearing down things, are they?

CARROLL: Well, Ruth Adams had a theory that as soon as the granddaughters of the alumni...

KEMENY: Oh, that is absolutely true. Yeah.

CARROLL: They got in and suddenly grandpa turned right around.

KEMENY: I think I had a story in the book but I can't remember...There was an alumnus in Texas who really gave John a hard time about coeducation and John had to go see him and he also saw his sons, two at the same time. And the guy said, "Well, since coeducation, I said I wouldn't give any more money." Blah, blah, blah. And John said, "Oh, God." But then the man said, "Since my granddaughter arrived..." [Laughter] It was a big put on. It was very cute.

CARROLL: When the first women came, did you try to be a bigger presence for them?

KEMENY: Not necessarily. I was not a mother-type. I was available. I didn't go out and make myself...I didn't go give them advice particularly. I am sure there were instances. I can't remember.

CARROLL: It will come. Don't worry.

KEMENY: I don't know that I did anything particularly different.

CARROLL: Did you have open houses or was your house...

KEMENY: Oh, yes. Not open house, but we had student groups over and we always had John's classes over. Yeah, we would just shoot the bull, so to speak. And they were asked to ask any questions they wanted to.

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John was upset about how women were being treated, really upset about it. He spoke about this. One of the things that upset him, which was not about women necessarily...we went to a dormitory, a student dormitory, and got to talking about things. This was '76 maybe and the students started saying, "Why are black students always put together with other black students as roommates?" John said, "Are they?" They said, "Always." He was furious. Housing underwent a great change. It was a nasty little secret there. But we didn't know about that.

CARROLL: Do you think it was worthwhile, in giving them some instant friends?

KEMENY: No. No. I think it was quite different then. Let's not put them with whites if possible. I don't think it was altruistic at all.

CARROLL: With the women, they set aside certain dorms for them.

KEMENY: Yes. Then we had coeducational dorms. All of this stuff was terribly new to us. Wow. Not having...allowing a woman in your room. When we came to Dartmouth, you could not have a woman in your room after some hour. You couldn't drink. All kinds of things.

CARROLL: You had to have one foot on the floor at all times. [Laughter] We had that one, I remember.

KEMENY: Yes. My father couldn't even go up on the first floor when I lived at Albright House.

CARROLL: But this was a slow change then. It doesn't happen overnight.

KEMENY: Oh, no. No. No. No.

CARROLL: What else did they have to do to make the campus ready for women?

KEMENY: They had to lower mirrors.

CARROLL: Oh. I never thought about that.

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- KEMENY: They changed the toilets. Obviously, they did. I remember things about the toilets. I have forgotten exactly what it was. Probably not urinals. [Laughter] I think they looked at Yale or some other places that had gone coeducational to see what things they might have missed. I can't remember.
- CARROLL: Now, you had your daughter, Jenny. She was at Yale and then transferred.
- KEMENY: To Dartmouth. Yes.
- CARROLL: And she was really at the vanguard at both of those.
- KEMENY: She was in the so-called first coeducational class although she didn't arrive until '73. Whatever. Yes.
- CARROLL: What was the difference? Did she ever talk with you about the differences between Yale and Dartmouth?
- KEMENY: You know, it's funny. She told her father a story. Yale had gone coeducational a few years before. Can you just wait one second? I just want to get my thoughts to her. She said, "I don't remember that." I said, "You have blocked out." At Dartmouth, the faculty was very much in favor of coeducation. At Yale, there were a number of faculty members who were not. Jenny was a very bright science student. She was in an organic chemistry class. The first day in the fall, the professor came in with his syllabi. He walked up and down putting out the syllabi on the desks, except he skipped every woman and he left theirs up on his desk. I mean, it was a pointed...
- CARROLL: No.
- KEMENY: Yes. No. She felt that there was quite a lot of anti-woman feeling there.
- CARROLL: That's interesting. When she came here, was it hard? Was she pointed out as the President's daughter?
- KEMENY: Oh, sure. Everybody knew.
- CARROLL: There was not much anonymity.

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- KEMENY: Oh, no. Yeah. It was difficult for her. In fact, she went into the theater, probably because she could be somebody else there. Yes. It is just very hard for kids, not only to protect themselves, but to protect themselves against things that are said about their father.
- CARROLL: Of course.
- KEMENY: A lot of it was good. Some of it wasn't. And then they felt that they had to respond. And we said to the kids, "The one thing that you have got to do when you go to college is to go to class." So what did they do? They did not go to class that often. [Laughter] But they did sort of reasonably. They did much better once they got out of college.
- CARROLL: Not everybody is ready at the same time.
- KEMENY: No. And also, I mean, they were probably rebelling a little bit inside. They didn't get into any great drug problems or "I hate my parents" problems. Thank God. They weathered that period reasonably well.
- CARROLL: They must have kept you pretty much in touch though with what the students were doing.
- KEMENY: Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. And they did have teenage problems. Oooh. Just not horrible ones. Horrible to them, but not as horrible as they could be. I think raising teenagers at the same time was difficult. It would have been difficult raising little babies at the same time.
- CARROLL: You do talk about in your book having, you said, Rob bringing in all his friends and cleaning out the refrigerator with great regularity.
- KEMENY: Oh, yes. They would have parties. Not necessarily drinking parties, but they would cook enormous amounts of stuff and I never knew. The house was so large that you didn't hear. I would literally come down in my nightgown to get something out of the refrigerator and that was a mistake. [Laughter] But that was his...little groups would come over and serenade me on my birthday. Students. It was fun.
- CARROLL: I can see. Do you think it is a positive thing to have the house of the President right there on Fraternity Row?

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KEMENY: Well, yes and no. It was built before there were any fraternities and they would come and ring the doorbell. They would want to see the President. Frequently. Most of the time, I would answer the door. I mean, nobody lived with us at night. And students would show up in various stages of inebriation.

CARROLL: I was wondering.

KEMENY: Or they would steal my car or John's car or they would...I would come downstairs and somebody would be asleep on the couch. [Laughter] We never locked our doors. Because you didn't lock your doors at that point.

CARROLL: Did you make any good friends that way? Your unexpected guests.

KEMENY: Yeah. A couple of Rob's friends. Yes. I think it is, in many ways, good. The trustees had offered...they were so glad we didn't accept. They offered to build us a house somewhere else and just use that for entertaining, but we said, "No. No. It will be alright." It was very noisy, as I probably wrote, and we solved that with some fans that just made white noise. I think it was important to live there. I do.

CARROLL: Was that a liveable house? Can you make it so?

KEMENY: Yeah. There are many rooms I never used except for guests. We used the study/library and a kitchen. We ate in the kitchen most of the time and parts of the upstairs. I never used the living room area. I never used the dining area. I used the dining area at some point to write a book, but I had to constantly pick everything up and put it up because we were going to have a party.

CARROLL: Did you every go out and address the alumni groups by yourself?

KEMENY: Yes. When I was asked. I was several times asked to address the Alumni Council. I can't remember what it was on. I addressed the Hub Club in Boston at the Union Oyster Bar, which was fun. I talked about the book, It's Different at Dartmouth. The other one was not It's Different at Dartmouth. I can't remember what it was on. I wish I knew. I don't remember. I don't know that the topic was... I don't know. Then at a reunion class...an old, old

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reunioning class asked me to be the speaker. That's a mistake. When they are fifty years out, an after-dinner speaker means they have all fallen asleep. [Laughter] It wouldn't matter what you said. I mean they are all elderly and it was pretty much past their bedtime. [Laughter] I think I spoke on my novel at that point. I spoke about being the President's wife at various times and I spoke about doing stuff with John and I spoke about my books to the alumni.

CARROLL: Do any of the trustees stand out in your mind for whatever reason?

KEMENY: I really liked [Richard] "Dick" Hill. I don't know if he is on your list. He was very supportive. Some of the trustees who were very supportive are dead. [William] "Bill" Morton ['59], who was really a help to John. I don't know...has anything come up about Carroll Brewster?

CARROLL: No. Not yet. I have heard through Jere Daniell that he was, what he calls, less than successful.

KEMENY: Yes. Although it was given out that he had resigned, John fired him and it made some people very upset, but he was on the make. There is no doubt about it.

And that's when he went to Bill Morton and said, "Bill. Look. I've got this problem." Bill listened and said, "Now, if you are wrong, then it will be on your shoulders. If you are right, I think it is important that we get you to let him go." Brewster had gone around lobbying to a whole lot of the trustees. Whether he wanted more power or what. He and John were just like this and I think he was a very sleazy guy. Some people adored him. [Norman E. "Sandy" McCulloch, Jr. '54] Sandy McCulloch still adores him, although Sandy, once he got over being a drunk and turned himself around, became a very good Chairman of the Board. So I am giving you all of these little tidbits.

CARROLL: There is a wonderful speech that Sandy McCulloch gave to an entering freshman class about the problem of abusing alcohol.

KEMENY: Yes. You see, this is all...and you will learn this, I think, probably...and I don't know whether I should say this or not; but, Dave McLaughlin helped Sandy very much. Do you know this?

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- CARROLL: Somebody had told me this. Yes.
- KEMENY: Had gotten him into a famous retreat and when it became obvious that Dave McLaughlin was not working out as President, it was Sandy who said, "You have to go." It was hard for Sandy. I mean, he did not resign. He was essentially told to resign. The faculty were up in arms. So, that was very difficult, I think, for Sandy because he had been helped so much by Dave.
- CARROLL: Sure.
- KEMENY: Dave was a terribly nice person. Dave was a terrible President. He was a C.E.O.
- CARROLL: Consensus was not his...
- KEMENY: No. Loyalty to him meant that you could not disagree with him, and that, with John, he said, "Disagree with me. I want to hear." Dave made it very difficult for many people. "You're not loyal. You don't believe what I..." He thought he was running a business. He was not running a business. This is not a business.
- CARROLL: This sort of leads me to your husband and his, I don't want to say ruling style, his leadership style. How would you characterize it?
- KEMENY: I have to go back again to saying, first of all, if you read some of his speeches, the language is not particularly poetic; but, it was his delivery and he could change your mind about anything. It was real. And using logic and simplicity and laying out all the reasons why. He could really show you what was what and where it would go. And this was time and again, of course, that he did this.
- CARROLL: So it was really through persuasion.
- KEMENY: Persuasion and using what God gave you to see that there are lots of paths, and this is the right one. Probably. "But, if you don't agree, tell me why not."
- CARROLL: Did he have to use this for...I am thinking of, under his administration, there were many more blacks admitted than at any

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other time. Was that something that was easy consensus or did that require consensus-building?

KEMENY: I don't think it required much consensus-building. I think almost everybody who was involved felt that it had to be, that this was so artificial and bad for everybody concerned. And the blacks that had been chosen were really as much like whites as could be, except they weren't white. They were...and there were some fabulous people who did graduate who were black who became businessmen or political, lawyers or political people. But, they were sort of the cream of the cream of the cream and you want a little more diversity than that. I mean, you want people who could make it, but you also want people who...Oh, we took in some people that probably shouldn't have made it. But they did. Their background was so horrible.

CARROLL: Was it under John Kemeny that the ABC Program...

KEMENY: No. That was started before he became President; but ABC certainly gave some of the people a start and some of them turned out to be super, super.

CARROLL: And was the Bridge Program part of his administration?

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Yes. That was part. Whether he started it or not, but it certainly was in place. I don't remember if he started it or not, but it certainly was there. When it began, I don't remember.

CARROLL: I can probably go look that up. Was there any kind of resistance on the parts of the alumni or the trustees to this opening up of the student body to more diversification?

KEMENY: Now, are you talking about women or are you talking about minorities?

CARROLL: Let's just focus on minorities now. We sort of talked about women.

KEMENY: It was John's idea to open it up to Native Americans. There really wasn't much fuss. I think fuss might have come later because it was difficult. It wasn't a smash program to begin with for quite a while because, gosh, these kids were so different. On women, we

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have discussed this already. I don't remember that there was a lot of fuss. I may be blocking out things. I'm quite serious.

CARROLL: What I am wondering is how did these students, especially blacks and Native Americans, disadvantaged whites...

KEMENY: Right.

CARROLL: And they need more support.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: They need different kinds of support groups. Who was in charge of making sure they got what they needed?

KEMENY: I don't know. Lu [Martin] would know. I don't really know.

CARROLL: And when they came here, obviously these supports were not initially in place.

KEMENY: I mean, there were...first of all, there were faculty advisors. Many faculty advisors with "x" number of freshmen. Some of that worked well; some of it did not work only because that the people were so different. The students were so different among themselves. The faculty member could relate to some, but not to others and it wasn't color. It was more culture.

As far as support groups, gradually we had more grown-up Native Americans. We had more blacks here as administrators or faculty members. All of this helped. At the beginning, it was a little difficult. Now I don't remember what happened when we were really beginning. The Bridge Program helped them over a hump of knowledge and ability to get wherever in their courses. I don't remember.

CARROLL: Pretty soon, though, after the black students got here, they were given a house and given their own center.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: That seemed to have really coalesced them.

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- KEMENY: Oh, absolutely. In fact, it bothered a lot of us that they just hung out together and I remember there was a very bright black student in the late 70's, I guess, whose last name was Cannon and we would call him "Boom-Boom" [Christopher Cannon '81]. [Laughter] I remember he and a friend came over and I say, "Damn it. Why are you always segregating yourselves?" He said, "Well." Blah, blah, blah. I said, "Why don't you go and sit next to a white person for a change?" That didn't go over very well. I mean, not that we weren't friends after that. It was just...that was too much and I think they wanted the white people to come over, but then they probably wouldn't have welcomed them anyway. There still is...and I am afraid that it is getting bad again...I haven't necessarily seen it here. I just keep reading about this. This self-segregation is yuck.
- CARROLL: Now the other pivotal point for the black students on campus, it seems to me as I am doing the reading...and maybe you can tell me if I am right, was the [William] Shockley Incident.
- KEMENY: Oh, yes.
- CARROLL: Do you want to talk about that?
- KEMENY: I remember pieces of it. I mean, this is a Nobel Prize winner for the...this thing in the computer [transistor]...the chip; but, he was a Neanderthal as far as thinking about what intelligence blacks have versus whites and he let it be known and he was speaking on campus. Why he was speaking on campus, I don't remember.
- CARROLL: It was the meeting of the National Academy of Sciences.
- KEMENY: Okay. So I remember John being in the room and asking them to calm down. This was before John was President.
- CARROLL: Yes, it is. Actually it was the year before.
- KEMENY: And it really didn't work. I have gotten this mixed up with...Is this where they were...
- CARROLL: This is where they were clapping.
- KEMENY: Yes. But this isn't where they were pushing the car.

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- CARROLL: No. I have never heard that story.
- KEMENY: No. This may be George Wallace. I get them mixed up.
- CARROLL: Oh, I didn't know that.
- KEMENY: He was also on campus. John and I helped picket George Wallace. We sang "We Shall Overcome" outside when he was speaking at Dartmouth. But the Shockley thing...

[End of Tape 2, Side A -- Beginning of Tape 2, Side B]

- KEMENY: ...you don't talk about it for twenty years or twenty-five years or whatever.
- CARROLL: I am poking the dormant ideas.
- KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah. I just remember that he spoke to the group. They were clapping and they didn't stop.
- CARROLL: Some of them were suspended because of that and there was a whole question that your husband and Leonard Rieser had spoken up that you have to be able to listen and debate ideas.
- KEMENY: Yes. Yes, but that did not go over well with the students at that point. They were not prepared to listen. They were mad; very upset and very mad. Reason did not win out.
- CARROLL: No. But what it did do, it seems, is coalesce them. They began to form groups. They began to see themselves as a unit and perhaps it had it's own life.
- KEMENY: Yes.
- CARROLL: Now, when did [George] Wallace come here? I haven't come across this.
- KEMENY: Wallace...It was not '72, because John was President. This was earlier, in the 60's and... You will have to look that up. I know that Wallace didn't even know that we were protesting outside. [Laughter] He must have gone in another door.

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- CARROLL: Well, now, your husband, soon after he was President, there were the shootings at Kent State and the invasion of Cambodia and he did what I consider this brilliant thing, and that was have the strike and the teach-in. What prompted him to do that?
- KEMENY: I don't know what prompted him to do it really. I think just intelligence, just knowing that this was terribly important and that, with luck, it would be a very meaningful experience for all involved. And it was. He used to get so angry about the media because parents would call up and say, "I am worried about my child. What is the best way to come or are the roads all blocked off?" Nothing was burning. Nothing...what they did not do...the media...was to say what colleges were doing...incredible things and I mean incredible things. There was just a spirit among the community, too. Everybody...
- CARROLL: Was this open to the community?
- KEMENY: If they wanted to. Yes. Yes. Yes.
- CARROLL: And who organized it all?
- KEMENY: It was students.
- CARROLL: Students.
- KEMENY: Some of them quite left wing who cared. I mean, they clipped these newspapers out every... They were up all night. They read the daily newspapers about stuff going on here and all around the country. You ought to talk with John Hennessey. Is he on your list?
- CARROLL: Yes. I will.
- KEMENY: He was the head to Tuck School and a good friend of John's. He organized students and they went down and spoke about the war on the steps of the Stock Exchange. They had to wear hard hats because they were being pelted. Medical students organized and went around speaking everywhere in both the states. It was...there is an Alumni Magazine article, June maybe of 1970 or that year...Most of it is devoted to this time. I mean, it was just a roller coaster...not a roller coaster, but a snowball. It was on everybody's mind. That's all you could think of and you almost had the feeling

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you could change the government's mind and, of course, you found that you couldn't. At that time, you just felt that this was such a powerful force.

CARROLL: So many campuses went up.

KEMENY: Went up. And we were worried that somebody...there were the Weathermen on campus. We knew who some of them were. And I think that I wrote that I had a little piece of paper that tells me how to make a bomb.

CARROLL: Really?

KEMENY: Yeah. There was a professor on campus who didn't have tenure.

CARROLL: Jonathan Mirsky.

KEMENY: Yeah.

CARROLL: I knew. I was going to ask you about Jonathan.

KEMENY: Well, Jonathan knew everything that was going on, certainly on the side of the Weathermen and he was the one that came over and talked about the possibility of bombs. Jonathan was weird, to put it mildly. We just didn't know what was going to happen and we weren't even living in the President's House at that point. We were living in a place that looked a whole lot like this. I was just afraid. Would somebody come up the road, a little old dirt road, and throw a bomb at our house? I thought the rhetoric was fascinating and full of idealism. Oh, my god.

CARROLL: You read it and you realize they were inspired.

KEMENY: They were inspired and it was wonderful for the kids. They will never forget and the faculty. They never forgot it. It was really...it really showed what students were capable of if they were passionate.

CARROLL: I talked to an alum who lived through that teach-in. He said he learned more in that week than the rest of his three and a half years, or whatever, at Dartmouth.

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- KEMENY: No kidding. Yes.
- CARROLL: In part, just because you were so engaged with the ideas and you lived them day and night.
- KEMENY: Absolutely. I mean, they didn't have to go to class. This was their classroom.
- CARROLL: Did you have any parents or alumni who complained about that? The closing of the traditional classes for this?
- KEMENY: Not that I remember, but I am sure it happened. It just did not have a big impression. That would have been obvious for some people to do.
- CARROLL: The other thing that I wanted to ask you about is I have seen the famous article in the Manchester Union Leader about "Dartmouth Chooses Another Lemon."
- KEMENY: Another lemon. Yes.
- CARROLL: Did anybody take that newspaper seriously or was this something that you felt you had to refute?
- KEMENY: Well, they laughed at it, although I think I wrote that the faculty gave John a lemon tree. The students made tee-shirts with printed lemons on them and they got a truckload of lemons and went down, or were going down to deliver them to the Union Leader. Oh, they were talked out of it because there was a rumor afoot that there were some strong-armed people there and would have beaten them up. But [William] Loeb was the enemy. He was the enemy. I wrote that if you were written about by Loeb, you got the "Loebel Prize." [Laughter] The lemons were a very important part of that time and then later, at the end of it when the students all met inside Leverone, I guess. John was to speak to them and it was...marijuana was...you could barely breathe...it was there. There was tie-dyed stuff. Everybody was stoned. [Laughter] I got John some lemons and he wrote his name on them and he threw some of them. He threw out lemons and his name was not on them. He really was a ham there. Then one of the fraternities wanted to raise money so he autographed the lemons.

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- CARROLL: So it was your idea to take them and throw them out to the audience?
- KEMENY: No. It was his idea. Well, yes. I think I did buy them. It was the way he did it...that he was a big fat ham. That's what. [Laughter]
- CARROLL: Did the Manchester Union Leader then follow his presidency. Were they always commenting on it?
- KEMENY: No.
- CARROLL: Just the first...
- KEMENY: No. I don't remember much. If they did, we ignored it. I literally do not remember. I don't know much about them that after that.
- CARROLL: In the archives right now, there is a very shriveled little lemon with his signature.
- KEMENY: [Laughter] You are kidding me. Oh, I didn't know... That is funny. I wondered what happened to all those lemons. There weren't that many, actually.
- CARROLL: One was saved.
- I read a speech that your husband gave, talking about the need for off-campus learning and he seems to have really stressed that.
- KEMENY: Yes.
- CARROLL: What do you think that grew out of?
- KEMENY: I don't know what it grew out of. He obviously grew up in a different culture. He couldn't speak English well, at all. I just think that he felt it was good for all kinds of reasons, just to see some of the other parts of the world. And the off-campus program grew and grew and grew. Some were a success. Many were successes. The one like Romania wasn't very much of a success. [Laughter]
- CARROLL: It's hard to imagine being there.

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- KEMENY: Yeah. And we had all kinds of off-campus programs in the WATTS area, Jersey City. Some of those have gone. Many of those have gone, I think. I think they were excellent for kids who grew up in white areas. And, of course, the language programs. I don't know exactly...that's what I can tell you. I mean, he felt that it was very important to get out, you know, WATTS area, or learn French in Grenoble or whatever.
- CARROLL: To have a wider experience.
- KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Yes.
- CARROLL: Well, it seems to have worked.
- KEMENY: And to have it as part of your year.
- CARROLL: Was that tied up then with the switch to the year-round class?
- KEMENY: Yes. They had to be off campus. I don't think they had to necessarily go to something abroad, but a lot of them chose that. I remember when John thought out that four quarter thing. I said, "It's great, but it is going to be too hot down here in the summer."
[Laughter]
- CARROLL: And you were right.
- KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Yes.
- CARROLL: Now it is hard to imagine not having...
- KEMENY: I know and it is the only way we could get enough students on campus was to keep constantly turning them over this way. Of course, there was the problem...Will he be with his class in his senior year? Or we will be missing a lot of our "x" year with our friends. These things can be ironed out.
- CARROLL: And, over time, it becomes the accepted... I know that John Kemeny was offered the presidency of other institutions and he wrote at one point about the deanship of a graduate school. Why did he never take any of those other offers?

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KEMENY: Well, most of them were not that exciting. The one that I didn't really want him to be was head of C.C.N.Y. [City College of New York] God. You live behind gated, guarded doors. He never really thought about that as anything really that he would do. But it had gotten up to the point where he was being offered things and there was some place in Washington. I have forgotten. I really blocked this out. I tell you. I didn't want to go. It was obvious that this was going to happen at some point and it would be something that he really did want. And then what do you do?

CARROLL: Was he offered these jobs while he was President?

KEMENY: No. Before he was President. I mean, this was the whole point. This was why the offer from Dartmouth was so heaven sent because he never thought he would get it. He had to have more clout in order to get things done.

CARROLL: What did he want to get done?

KEMENY: What did he want to get done? His ideas on education. I don't know how to just put this. I have to think about this.

CARROLL: We can come back to that. Do you ever read The Dartmouth Review?

KEMENY: I did for awhile and then I didn't.

CARROLL: What did you think of it?

KEMENY: I think most of the people on that have very little compassion. Twisted. You know the famous story about the first three editors of The Dartmouth Review with Oxfam. They had their annual fast and people contributed their lunch money or their dinner money. The editors dressed up in formal clothes, took a big room at the Inn and ordered lobster and champagne. I mean, that was their answer to Oxfam. Now that's just a small thing, but that, in a way, typifies them. They are "anti" so much. Thank God, John only had a year of them or whatever. That was enough.

Several of them have gone on to bigger and greater things like writing for the Wall Street Journal editorial page or Laura Ingraham [85] who is now a big Republican party whatever or Dinesh

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D'Souza ['83] who has strange ideas on race, etc. A lot of them were nasty and rude and full of fundamentalist virtues. They were like somebody who had just discovered religion and Jesus Christ has taken them and they have the "word" and nobody else has the "word" and anybody who disagrees with them is something terrible and they loved to use the spy techniques and go into meetings of gays or something else and then blab about what they had heard. I just think they're...and a number of people who were on the editorial board like Jack Kemp, went off. Several others went off when they discovered that these weren't just little National Reviews...a smaller branch of the National Review.

CARROLL: In training.

KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah. So I suppose we are supposed to have freedom of speech. Sometimes...sometimes I question it. I don't know. I don't see it [The Dartmouth Review] now at all.

CARROLL: What caused President Kemeny to want to retire after ten years?

KEMENY: Well, he had told the trustees that he would serve between ten and fifteen years. He served eleven and a half and, at the end of ten years, he said, "Look. I am thinking about whatever. You had better start looking." I remember Dick Hill saying, "What will Dartmouth do without John Kemeny?" He was tired.

CARROLL: Were you behind that?

KEMENY: Yeah. I think I was. Yes. I remember we came up here after the last "Do". The new president had been sworn in and there was a receiving line and then we left. It was so strange.

CARROLL: Because it was the end?

KEMENY: No. No. It was just strange not to have it on our shoulders any more. Now it was somebody else's problem. And it was a problem at times. I mean, John's problem was "What am I going to now besides teach?" He didn't really know what direction he wanted to go. He did within a year or two. He devised his new BASIC which took a lot of his time and he enjoyed it. Of course, he went back to full-time teaching, up to age sixty-two and then he was on half-time or whatever it was. Whatever. But I think... Look, that was a long

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time for the presidents. It is a long time for the presidency...I mean, I don't know if you remember, but by 1975, he was senior Ivy president and Brown had two turnovers in that five years. The average term was four years.

CARROLL: I wonder what happened when you get to Dickey when you have twenty-five years.

KEMENY: But life was much more simple. He may have had...

CARROLL: What changed?

KEMENY: New programs. Just the computer age. Tons of dollars a whole different way... It was just sort of a little men's club here. I mean, yes. They had some good courses. They had some good teachers. Everything was very easy. Not easy intellectually, but just more gentle living, I think... Now I don't think it took the toll. Of course, John Dickey was much younger when he started. He was thirty something.

CARROLL: That's true. Yes.

KEMENY: He was sixty something when he stopped and it just was easier. I don't think it took the toll.

CARROLL: There is also, of course...I have heard other people say that there was an increased emphasis on fundraising during your years.

KEMENY: Yeah, but there had to be because, if we had all these new programs... I mean, you are talking about innovations, the Ph.D. programs for example, which he innovated partly before the presidency. All of these off-campus things. He was hiring women which had not been done before. Everything expanded. You know, they scream about the White House expanding, but that happens. There are more and more things to be taken care of.

CARROLL: Was it during your years that the freeway links to Dartmouth were put in?

KEMENY: Many of them had gone in before. It was during the 60's more. I mean, it took eight hours to go to New York and four hours to go to Boston. It was all on two-lane highways.

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CARROLL: That had to have changed then.

KEMENY: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. It made getting here much easier and we started to lock our doors at night. You know, we had two interstates that crossed here.

CARROLL: But I wonder if that increased accessibility also increased demands on the president. You don't think to invite them down for an evening to the Boston Club when he has to go four hours; but when it is only two, suddenly he is a lot more accessible.

KEMENY: True, but I don't know that it increased demands on him. I think they would have invited him whether it was four or two hours. [Laughter] I'm serious. He could have taken the train at that time or whatever. I don't know that it made an enormous difference. Don't forget that it had gone in before. I don't know what it had done to John Dickey also. It was during the 60's because...I know it was during the 60's because [President Dwight D.] Eisenhower had started it, sort of. He was out in '60. Whatever.

CARROLL: Were you surprised at all when David McLaughlin was tapped to be the next president?

KEMENY: No.

CARROLL: No?

KEMENY: No, because he was John's choice.

CARROLL: I did not know that.

KEMENY: Yes. John had worked with him as a Trustee and as Chairman of the Board. Not that John's choice made that much difference, but he had gotten along very well with Dave. Dave had really worked very hard. Dave supported him, both as a Trustee and as a Chairman of the Board. So it was with great surprise...I was driving down for something to honor Dave's selection...I can't remember. Elizabeth Dycus was driving me and she starts talking about it and I am so surprised. Elizabeth was very upset. Elizabeth was on that search committee. She was secretary, maybe, and then she tells

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me that Mary Kelley is very upset. Obviously what came out during interviews with David were things that we had no idea about.

CARROLL: Like what? Do you remember?

KEMENY: No. I don't remember. Just that I was very surprised. I mean, I knew one David McLaughlin. They saw another David McLaughlin. John was very surprised. After they had chosen Dave, he takes Dave to the airport where his wife, Judy, is waiting and there Dave tells Judy, "Oh, by the way, I..." Judy had no idea. These people did not talk.

CARROLL: He didn't call her?

KEMENY: No. It was a very strange marriage. I don't know all of the details and most of what I know is hearsay. That did surprise John. And then, later on, things that Dave did did bother John very much. What he did to Ruth LaBombard. He put her upstairs on the third floor, made his two assistants do his income tax, keep track of his investments. I mean, John would never have done that. John did his own income taxes here. His treatment of his staff, Dave.

One of the things that really bothered him was...I shouldn't be blabbing this. Dave came to him at some point and asked for his advice. So John gave his advice. I think it was about moving a building or something. Dave said "Exactly. That is absolutely right. Thanks very much." He goes to the next person, asks that same question. "That's absolutely right." A completely different answer. That happened constantly and that was really hard to take.

I know John thought moving the Medical Center was an enormous expense, much too much expensive and that we could have done it here if they had just approached the Town differently. Look. I am sure there were a lot of things. I don't think he knew. I heard about them afterwards. But the way he treated Ruth LaBombard was unconscionable, really.

CARROLL: Well, Ruth LaBombard had really been the right-hand man of John Kemeny.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. That's probably why he did it. But he did it...he exiled her, which was so pointed.

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CARROLL: Well, since she is no longer with us...I am sorry because I would have loved to interview her...could you talk a little bit about what she did, what roles she played in keeping things moving during the Kemeny Administration.

KEMENY: She kept things moving. I have to say that. Ruth was quite unflappable. I remember talking to John about that day when he decides that he is going to go on the air that night about Kent State, Cambodia, and he said, "Cancel all my appointments." He called up Ruth. "Cancel all my appointments." Blah, blah, blah, blah. Do this and this and this and this. Ruth said, "Yes, I will." She never said "What's going on?" I said if I had been asked..."What's happening?" [Inaudible] Ruth kept things really going.

Ruth was incredibly intelligent and had been born in Lyme Center in a farming family and, as I think I mentioned on the phone to you, only went to school until she was seventeen. Got married when she was seventeen. Had a baby when she was eighteen. She just had an ability...why can't I express this correctly...She was absolutely trustworthy. He never questioned that he'd ask her to do this or that or talk with her about this or that. She was a sounding board in some ways, I was his real sounding board, but he was nice to her. He would get furious with me sometimes. [Laughter]

CARROLL: How did he find her?

KEMENY: She had been on Dickey's staff. She was a secretary; but when John Dickey left, he said, "You know, John. Keep an eye on her." He didn't say "Hire her." And John immediately saw how terrific she was. He had an ability of doing this. Sometimes I think he hired lemons, but he could recognize talent.

CARROLL: And Alex Fanelli was the other person he worked very closely with.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. And he had been an assistant to John Dickey. This may have been a trial thing for Alex or for John, but it worked out very well and Alex was...he is a good writer. He was awfully good at that. He was another person that John could speak to frankly.

CARROLL: Now when President [Richard M.] Nixon asked John Kemeny...

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KEMENY: Not Nixon.

CARROLL: [President James] Carter.

KEMENY: Yes. Carter.

CARROLL: When Carter asked him...boy, that was a slip... All that talking about Cambodia. Asked President Kemeny to head up the Three Mile Island Investigation. What happened back here with the day-to-day running of the campus?

KEMENY: Well, that was a little difficult. Ruth did it and several other people. Ruth did a lot of it. John was hopping back and forth and back and forth and back and forth. That was very difficult and both of us lost weight and we called it "The Six Month Stress Diet". It was wonderful that we lost weight.

I remember the call came in at nine o'clock in the morning. I was in bed watching television. Somebody was making Easter eggs in the kitchen. I was drinking my coffee. John was shaving. The call came in. "Carter has chosen you." He knew that he was to be...maybe, he might be on the committee, but he didn't even know that for sure. But the call came in from Jack Watson, who was an assistant to Carter and "They want you to be Chairman."

Oh, I know what. No. No. That's not true. That is true and it is not true. Several days before, he went to Washington. He had been told that he had been chosen and would he take it? I said, "Take it." Dave McLaughlin said, "You've got to take it." But we thought it would be two or three weeks before he would go start this. Two or three days later, the call comes in. "President Carter would like to announce this from the Briefing Room at four o'clock this afternoon and to have you there." This was at nine o'clock in the morning in Hanover.

And so we got Doug to drive us. I put my hair up in the car. Oh, first of all, two nights before, after he had realized that they were going to chose him as Chairman, I go out in the trash in the garage and look through to try to find my Newsweek and Time to try to find out what did happen there. [Laughter] I mean, we were so busy that we weren't keeping up on that particular issue. So he was reading blah, blah, blah. So I am putting nail polish in the car and

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my hair up. He was writing a speech that he has to give that will be broadcast across the entire country, and he would do parts of it and we would argue about this and that. It was a good speech when he got done. I think it was at the point...one of those points when you learn that the N.R.C. was not the National Research Council. [Laughter] It was the Nuclear Regulatory Committee. [Laughter] But he was intelligent. He knew physics, etc; but he hadn't kept up. And, boy, did he learn! Boy, did he learn. Rapidly.

CARROLL: At that time...how long did it take? Six months?

KEMENY: It took six months.

[End of Tape 2, Side B -- Beginning of Tape 3, Side A]

CARROLL: So he is going down to Washington.

KEMENY: We are going to Bradley [Airport, Hartford] to catch a plane and he is boning up and writing a speech and we are met by several White House-types who take us in a car to the White House; at which point we stop and one of the guards said "You, you, you." Then he looks at me. "Who is she?" I mean, I wasn't on the list to go in, but they let me anyway. So then we go in and we wait. Jody Powell picks me a magnolia which I thought was very sweet...and there were a couple of Southern types there. And this is waiting outside the Oval Office. Then, finally the door opens. "The President will see you now." So we all get up and nobody moves. And I am looking and it is the Southern gentlemen waiting for me to go first. [Laughter] Well, later, it is so funny. I go in and I say, "How do you do, President Carter." And he says, "Who is the woman?" I mean, nobody says anything. [Laughter] Finally it got straightened out.

CARROLL: How wonderful.

KEMENY: John said...John made some remark about "It will have to be the truth." In other words, we can't skip over anything or whatever, and Carter was very good. It was fascinating. There were about six of us in the Oval Office. Then, when we started saying goodbye, I remembered that Carter and his wife were going on a vacation, so I patted him on the back and said, "Have a good vacation." You just

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forgot where you were or almost everything. So, anyway, then it became very, very, very difficult. To pick the people. Washington has a dearth of secretaries. Trying to find one. That's when Ruth and Elizabeth came down at some point.

CARROLL: Oh, really.

KEMENY: Oh, yes. They did a lot. Elizabeth can tell you about that time. They did an enormous...helping to organize the office. They were in and out and John was in and out, and there were hearings, and the country was watching the hearings. The B.B.S. [British Broadcasting Service] had all kinds of stuff on it. It was an exciting time.

CARROLL: Did you live down in Washington?

KEMENY: We got an apartment, what they called the guest quarters, where we could leave our stuff while coming in and out. I wasn't down as much as he was, obviously. But, you know, you wanted to ask me how we did things together. This is one where I was very much involved. We talked over all kinds of problems. In the White House. He was off meeting somebody and I was sitting with Jody Powell and Berl Bernhard [51] and Jim Beatty maybe and they start talking about the utility. The G.P.U. was just the utility that owned or ran Three Mile Island and they were deciding...they were deciding that such and such would be done and I remember saying...and I don't know exactly what it was...I said, "I don't think John would agree." And I was right. [Laughter]

That was when you were really in the middle of it. One person was allowed to interview us...interview both of us was The New York Times. So there was this long interview and I said, "Look. I want to set the record straight. The last time you interviewed my husband, you said that he had a computer in the bedroom. That is a lie." I said, "Would you please fix it in this article?" And he did! [Laughter]

CARROLL: That's great...

KEMENY: Those were times...I mean, that's an example where I worked with him closely. An example about the coeducation where I said that

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so and so I thought would be a "yes". I am trying to give you examples of where we worked on problems together. Okay.

CARROLL: I think we will stop there.

END OF INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW: Jean Kemeny
INTERVIEWED BY: Jane Carroll
PLACE: Kemeny home
Etna, New Hampshire
DATE: July 5, 1996

CARROLL: This is July the 5th. I had to think about that. 1996. This is Jane Carroll and I am at the Etna home of John Kemeny and Jean Kemeny. This is our second session and I thought we would start first talking about your breast cancer.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: You had, during your husband's Presidency, breast cancer. How did you deal with that?

KEMENY: First of all, I didn't feel a lump. I had the flu and I went to the doctor for the flu. And I had noticed a little sort of thickening at the bottom of my bosom, so I asked him about it. He felt it and said, "Nothing is wrong. Nothing. But just lift your arm." And I did and there was a

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dimple way up under my arm and he said "Ooops." So he felt and he couldn't find anything. He then called in a surgeon who specializes in cancer surgery. He couldn't find anything. But they said "You had better have a mammogram." I did. There was a lump. I came in and had a biopsy. They told me it was cancer. They said it was the size of an August pea, which is a good size. That's not bad. I had the flu so they had to sort of doctor me up so that I could have surgery. I think I was numb more than anything else.

I did not have chemotherapy at the time because it hadn't really spread anywhere as far as they could tell. Now they do it almost inevitably and, luckily, it will be twenty years this fall...knock on wood. I think if I had it again, which I probably am more likely to have it, it would probably be more of a different disease. I am guessing. I just don't know.

Yeah. It was scary. And John, I gather, was very frightened. I heard from Frank Smallwood, who was on the faculty in the Government Department. John invited him over to the President's House and just said, "I don't know how I can bear this if something happens to Jean." But I never knew this. I didn't know this until several years ago. Frank told me. John just poured out his worry to him. I knew he was worried, but he was really, really worried.

I sort of sailed through for awhile and then I began to read the stories. Jane Brodie, who writes for The New York Times, wrote this article that if you...her mother had breast cancer...that if you have not had chemotherapy, you are terribly, terribly, terribly liable to get it again. A reoccurrence or whatever. So I really got frightened and John called my surgeon over. He came over to talk with me. He said, "I know Jane Brodie. She is above and beyond on this particular subject because of her mother." He said, "I do not agree with her." I felt much better.

Yeah. I did not have reconstruction. It was harder then to have it; but what I did find was really many hospitals are not equipped to counsel women afterwards. I was a member, at that time or very soon after, of a committee at the Cancer Center and I lobbied that they ought to have breast...what do you call them [prosthesis]...anything so that the poor lady can go home from the hospital without stuffing socks in there and that there ought to be

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better counseling and there ought to be places so that you didn't have to go to Boston to buy a prosthesis. They just hadn't really...all the surgeons were men, I think. Nobody had really... So I started sort of a lobbying and got some stuff accomplished on this.

CARROLL: Is this at the Norris Cotton Center?

KEMENY: Yes. And they were very good. It was just about the time that Mrs. [Happy] Rockefeller and Betty Ford had had it. Before then, it was quite...it wasn't talked about that much. You see, it is in my family. When my maternal grandmother had it, it was practically not talked about at all. I don't think I knew about it until much later.

And also the scary thing is, except for the fact that it is in my family...I got my period late. I got my menopause at a reasonable time. I had children early. I nursed my children. I did all the things you are supposed to do. All of the strikes against you. But, obviously, genetics plays a very large role in it and my daughter discovered it, while she was nursing her first child at the age of thirty-six. She is doing well. Knock on wood. It will be four years just about now. But that's too young.

CARROLL: Yes. Did you speak about it in the community? Do people know what you had gone through?

KEMENY: No. But I did write about it in my book and I think a lot of people knew about it.

CARROLL: I don't know if Alex Fanelli ever told you this, but he told me that during the time that you were in the hospital when it was first diagnosed that your husband was almost not functioning in the office.

KEMENY: Well, that's what I found out. But I didn't know this until just several years ago. Nobody told me.

CARROLL: It was very sweet of him to be that strong.

KEMENY: Yes. Oh, he was wonderful. He loved me with one bosom, no bosoms or whatever. I mean, there was never any of this sexist feeling...or whatever the word is. I got letters from women who said, "Oh, you poor girl. My husband has never loved me since."

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Really. "But, you know, there is a very important part of me missing and therefore my husband feels that life is not romantic anymore." It was just frightening. Not frightening to me, but just sad and...

CARROLL: Were there support groups for you at that time?

KEMENY: No. No. There weren't. But they didn't exist at the time. I remember reading First You Cry. By a woman called Betty Rollin, when she hears that she has had a biopsy, which I guess she found very painful. I didn't find anything painful. I just wanted...anyway. She finds out and she faints. I said, "Gosh." I just didn't...I guess I held on more. I didn't give in to it. I probably gave into it later, but I felt much braver than Betty Rollin.

CARROLL: Then you were all treated at the Dartmouth Medical Center.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Everything was fine except that they didn't have backup to sort of counsel you or help you find a prosthesis, which they now do.

CARROLL: So how did you go about doing that?

KEMENY: Well, we asked my surgeon and he said that the nearest place that you could get one was then in Boston. So we went to Boston ten days after my surgery. I was still bandaged like mad, but I had this sort of a pseudo prosthesis. I don't remember if it was socks or what it was and I wore a very nifty von Furstenberg dress. I don't know if you remember the wraps.

CARROLL: Yes.

KEMENY: But it was long, because you could still wear long things in the evening. We went to the Ritz Carlton. We stayed at the Ritz Carlton. We went to dinner and I opened it just as much as I dared with the neckline and then I couldn't cut my meat. John had to cut it. My right arm was inoperable still. It just was not working. But otherwise, you know, you would try to put on a big front.

CARROLL: What advice did you give your daughter when she told you?

KEMENY: I didn't give her much advice. I mean, we just talked about it in general. She remembers it vividly and I think I just said, "I'm sorry."

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I am so sorry." Probably I felt guilty that I...I know it is stupid...but that she got that gene from me. I'm pretty sure. Of course. And she did not have the kind of a lump that you can now remove and...its called a lumpectomy. It was more defuse, but it was not in her lymph nodes. So she had to have six months of chemotherapy. And the poor girl...John died during her chemotherapy...and Jenny came up, of course, and stayed with me for two weeks after the service, after I came out of the hospital and with a one-year-old baby and she would go in and have chemotherapy at Dartmouth-Hitchcock. I mean she was really terrific. I was so impressed with her and I wrote her a letter and told her how great I thought she had been because she had a lot of things to worry about. So she did a marvelous job. I mean, I had had a heart attack a week after John died, so that is why I was in the hospital.

CARROLL: So it all came together at one time.

KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah. Well, that's life. Life is unfair. As long as you can say "life is unfair" that...I'm serious. I think that helps me.

CARROLL: [inaudible]

KEMENY: Jim [James] Wright. You may have met Jim Wright. His wife had breast cancer last year or so and I called them up to say, "Look. I've had it and I got through it and I just wanted to say how sorry I was." Then I said, "Jim" or "Susan". I have forgotten. "Life is unfair. If you just keep..." He used it in a speech at the Cancer Center. He didn't say who said it. He said "a friend of theirs who had gone through quite a lot" had used this. It sort of makes things... You don't say "Why me?" You just say, "Life is not fair." You could be the best person in the world and whammo. You can get whacked.

CARROLL: When this was all over, did it change the role that you played at all in the community? Did you have to slow down?

KEMENY: No. I recovered from that. It was probably the easiest operation that I have ever had, actually, as far as pain was concerned. You really put up a front. You really want to show how brave you are or something, and I can't think that it did. I did feel resentful that I couldn't relax. It's not that I couldn't. I could have if I wanted to, but I couldn't just sit back and feel sorry for myself. You know, be

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cosseted and whatever. I did get back and I did do things. I don't think I entertained as much after that. I entertained. I just didn't do quite as much as I had done before and I don't know if that is the reason particularly.

CARROLL: So '76. That was also the year your daughter graduated from Dartmouth.

KEMENY: Yes. That's right. The 200th anniversary of the United States of America. All sorts of things.

CARROLL: How did the children react?

KEMENY: They were worried. They were wonderful. My son, who is a dear, sweet boy, had a girlfriend at Dartmouth and there would be some party and I had brought back from India several saris. Saris are classical things. They have been worn for two thousand years. You can wear them at any time if you want to get dressed up. So Robbie said "Could Jill borrow a red sari." I said, "Sure." I was in the hospital. A couple of hours later he came in with Jill. "We can't figure out how to do this." So I got up out of my sick bed, with my bandage, and showed her how to wrap a sari. [Laughter] I was very impressed with myself. I could hardly move an arm.

CARROLL: That says something, too, about their relationship with you. They expected that they could do that to you.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Yes. They are really...I am very pleased with my children.

CARROLL: I saw a picture of you in a receiving line and you were wearing one of your saris.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes.

CARROLL: And I thought that is an extremely elegant look.

KEMENY: Well, it is. It is very simple and yet it is quite feminine. It's all one piece of material, which you could even...all you need is a string around your waist really because there is a lot of tucking around here and then folding to make folds and then you flip it over your arm, your shoulder. Yeah.

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CARROLL: How did you learn?

KEMENY: An Indian lady taught me. A very nice Indian lady who decided that she wanted to be a tour guide because she was bored. Her husband made a lot of money in Bombay in import/export. So she happened to be our tour guide for some things about Bombay, including Ghandi's residence at some point, and she just sort of decided that she liked us. There were four of us with children and so she sort of adopted us and showed us a lot of things that we would not have seen, and also helped me buy saris. I said, "Do you think I should wear them in India." She said, "Oh, yes. We would be honored." She was the one who taught me how to fold.

CARROLL: This was the vacation you took when you took the children around the world?

KEMENY: This was the nine-month sabbatical. Yeah. And we were in Bombay because it was the place that had a lot of mathematical institutes, etc., and John wanted to...John was also doing pure research in mathematics.

CARROLL: Was this before he was President?

KEMENY: Yes. '64-'65.

CARROLL: So he was there doing research?

KEMENY: No. He was doing his own research, but he needed places that had good math libraries. Israel was one. Bombay for six weeks. Japan. It was really a fascinating trip. If you want me to go into it at some point, I will.

CARROLL: I would love it. When you look at those places, they are all so different.

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: I am sort of wondering how the changes from culture to culture...that must have taken a bit of adjusting.

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KEMENY: I would say that going from Bombay to Bangkok was the most wonderful breath of fresh air I ever remember. Bombay...you land at an airport and, as the plane taxis to the whatever, you look out a window of the plane and there it looks like they are building the pyramids. Women in cotton saris are carrying baskets with stones on their heads and little children are hanging on to the back of mommy's sari. That is the only way. They have no one to take care of them. They are paid a pittance and they are just laboring, walking up and up and up. They are building some building, but honest to God, it looked like it was two or three thousand years ago and then the wealth in Bombay is fantastic. The Parsi cult. This woman that I had mentioned earlier was a Parsi. They believe in fire, water and earth and something else.

CARROLL: Air, probably.

KEMENY: Air. Thank you. They are the ones who put the dead in the Tower of Silence, which we went by. We did not go in. Where the vultures take care of the body. So here you would walk...I would take the children to an aquarium in Bombay and, to get there, we would walk partly on the sidewalk, but frequently in the street because lying on the sidewalk were people. But it wasn't as it is in New York where, okay, they are homeless and it is very sad. These could be dead people. It was an incredibly horrible experience.

Bombay is on the ocean so there are lovely winding roads with benches; but you couldn't sit on the bench because, underneath in the shade, was somebody either alive or dead. Then you would look off this way and there was a burning gap where they were burning the bodies. And, above, there were vultures and buzzards circling and circling and the stench of the city was unbearable. It was just of garbage. And, yet, then we would be invited to a wedding...friends of this Parsi lady, at the race course, where the wealth was unbelievable. We ate off of banana leaves, with your right hand only. The left is used for other things. And the diamonds and rubies...I have never in my life seem so much wealth. So this contrast is fantastic.

So we got to Bangkok, which now I am afraid is a very polluted city; at that time, it was not. It was a city of wide avenues and temples reflecting, with colored glass and porcelain, just millions of pieces in

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these temples. And the little children going to school with the knapsacks on their backs on their little uniforms. You didn't see poverty. I am sure it was there. I just didn't see it at that time. Lovely, lovely people, the Thai people.

The Indians that we met were very cultured. The overpopulation is just too much for anybody. On every street corner at that time, and this was over thirty years ago, were places where a man could get a vasectomy. I am not kidding. They wanted to do this sort of thing; but, in the poorer families, the more children you have, the more you have people to work. I will talk about this later. I am bored with this. Let's hear a question.

CARROLL: This must have been a very informative experience for your children.

KEMENY: Well, it was because...I think I mentioned at some point to you...that, coming back to Hanover, which is a fairly liberal community, was a terrible shock to them, partly because they had been used to seeing a lot of the poverty, and partly because they tried to talk to their peers about what they had seen and their friends just could care less. They just didn't know what they were talking about, didn't care what they were talking about. I am sure a lot of them, when they grew up, cared. But, at that time, it bothered them terribly, my children.

CARROLL: This is sort of changing the subject a little, but I was wondering...I know there was a lot of interaction between your husband and the Trustees because of necessity with the Presidency. Did any of the Trustee stand out in your mind?

KEMENY: Yes. Ralph Lazarus ['35]. I don't know if someone has mentioned him to you. And [William] Bill Morton ['59]. Ralph was head of Federated Department Stores and Bill Morton was head of American Express. And they are both dead, sadly. Berl Bernhard ['51] was a riot. Richard Lombard ['53] was a wonderful man and he is dead. He is my age. Dave Weber ['65] was an interesting young man who was put on...he taught at Exeter. I know...George Munroe '43 I liked very much. I am forgetting people. You will have to give me some names and let me...

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CARROLL: I am curious about...in working with these people, did they help him in his getting in tune with the Presidency?

KEMENY: No. I don't think so. John had six weeks to start. I mean, that's all he had. I am sure they did, but I think John knew as much about it as they did. I mean, when John was hired, the Chairman of the Board said "We haven't done this in a long time. We don't know..."

CARROLL: That's right. Twenty-five years?

KEMENY: At least. Twenty-five years at least. I don't know. John usually relied on himself except when a couple of things came up and I don't know if Alex talked with you about this and I don't really think I ought to. There was a big problem with the Dean of the College and...

CARROLL: Oh, Carroll Brewster.

KEMENY: Yes. And John felt that he was undermining everything. In fact, I wrote a poem about it which, some day, I will show you. No. It's the Ten Commandments. It was to Carroll Brewster. One of which is "Thou shalt not be President of Dartmouth College." That was the ending. I think that is what he wanted. And John said "Can I speak to you, Bill Morton." And Bill came over. John said, "Look. I think this and this and this about Carroll Brewster." And Bill said something about "If you are wrong, we will probably have to fire [you]. If you are right, we will support you like mad."

And he was right and, essentially, John got Brewster another job at a college. But John, who was the most moral person, who never lied in his life, and I mean this, even when he should have...when a white lie would help. He talked to the search committee of this particular college and let's say that he didn't lie. He just didn't tell the whole truth. [Laughter] So, yes. Carroll Brewster did get another job; but, essentially, he was fired from Dartmouth and that college let him go not too long afterwards. So anyway. He was a thorn in the side. He was mean to my son. He was called Brew Deanster because he would go to fraternities and be a "rah, rah" fraternity boy. I never found out what made him tick. There was big, blind ambition there.

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- CARROLL: Was he a Dartmouth alum?
- KEMENY: No. No. No. He was Yale, I think. I am guessing.
- CARROLL: I think you are right about that. It rings a bell.
- KEMENY: And I know that John Dickey liked him very much. Carroll Brewster had a wonderful, lovely wife. A Mary, a Madonna type of person.
- CARROLL: That's what Alex Fanelli said.
- KEMENY: Really?
- CARROLL: He said that you always wonder how people get paired up.
- KEMENY: Yes. Isn't that interesting. I really liked her very much. I didn't know her that well. But Carroll was, to the former President of Dartmouth, John Dickey adored Carroll, as did Sandy McCulloch. Sandy still adores Carroll. I think John Dickey was upset that he was let go, but that's too bad. He wasn't President any more and he also didn't know the inner workings, etc.
- CARROLL: Is it hard to be President at an institution when the former President is still there?
- KEMENY: No. Not really because John Dickey, very carefully, never, never, never...he really divorced himself from anything. There was some function and my husband said, "I wonder why John Dickey isn't here." After about six years in office, he said, "I know why John Dickey wasn't here. I wouldn't be either." [Laughter] No. He didn't. I do know that James Conant, who was President of Harvard, had a hell of a time for a while because...was it [Abbott Lawrence] Lowell who had been previous President...was always butting in on him and that's why Conant left Cambridge and came to live here. He was wonderful and his wife was wonderful. This is a story which I am sure...this has to do with James Conant and being offered the Presidency of Harvard. His wife told me that when they offered it to him, there was no mention of salary and, at some point, Conant sort of said...I mean, he had been a chemistry professor at Harvard...he sort of mentioned something and Lowell said, "Salary?" Honest to God. Lowell had a lot of money and they, honest to God, decided that, of course, Conant would be President of Harvard and

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money..."We don't talk money. It is such an honor to be President of Harvard. We never thought of paying you." I am serious. [Laughter] Well, anyway.

CARROLL: I hope he disabused them of this notion.

KEMENY: Yes. He did. But it is such a common commentary on that whole era and that particular college. University. Sorry.

CARROLL: You get in the habit of saying "college". When they were working with all of these people coming in and out of Tuck, how much influence did the Trustees have? I know they ultimately vote, but did they ever change John Kemeny's mind on anything that you can remember?

KEMENY: I don't know. I don't know. Nothing springs to mind immediately.

CARROLL: Reading John Kemeny's speeches, it always makes such a rationed and reasoned presentation. I was just curious to know if anyone ever made him deviate from what he had initially decided.

KEMENY: I would say "no". [Laughter] My first reaction is to say "no". And I am sure that there were certain things that he wanted. He probably had to...I can't remember now, Jane. To go back to this recent, the way of attacking something. He could talk them into something. I am sure he did. I just don't remember. If I looked at certain things, which I should do, I can probably think up things that worked both ways.

CARROLL: What made me think of this, when they were debating coeducation and the first proposal was for an affiliated college.

KEMENY: Oh, yes. That was the way we really thought that it was the only way we could get women here was to have an affiliate or have it in Norwich. It was going to be terribly expensive. At that time, twenty-five million I think was the number I heard, but I can't remember, and there was no money to do it, number one. Then it became...seemed sort of artificial. The whole business.

CARROLL: But the Trustees seemed to have wanted it to be the route.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. But then they were talked out of it, slowly.

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CARROLL: That's what I was getting at. It seemed to me that that...

KEMENY: I can't remember when that was first proposed. Does Alex remember?

CARROLL: I think it was first proposed in 1970.

KEMENY: Okay.

CARROLL: And there is a whole series of meetings in '70 with John Kemeny and the different Trustees. He talks to them.

KEMENY: Well, Alex was in on that and I would get a point of view, which I don't always remember. In fact, I frequently don't remember. I would have to...All I do remember is the final vote. It was very exciting.

CARROLL: It was not unanimous.

KEMENY: No. No. It was not.

CARROLL: Do you remember what the numbers were, at all?

KEMENY: At least two "no" votes. I'm pretty sure. It was certainly a good majority, but I don't remember.

[End of Tape 4, Side A -- Beginning of Tape 4, Side B]

CARROLL: You were saying that there were Trustee wives and that they, too, had personalities...

KEMENY: Oh, yes. I was a little leery of them to begin with. I mean, these were frequently wives of very successful men, and I was a lot younger than most of them. They turned out to be a marvelous, supportive group. The only place that I ran, well I ran into two problems. One, when I began lobbying, not for me, but for the next president's wife, that if she wished, she should be paid to do the job I had been doing and it turns out that several wives of presidents in

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this country, of university presidents, have used my book and have been paid. So I am delighted that it worked. But they were very much against it. I think because most of them were wives of C.E.O.s and the wife's position was much different. She was not involved with the company. She was really a hostess, a support of her husband; but really a hostess. I don't think they ever really knew all of the things that I ended up doing.

The other was sort of a funny story. I was in Chicago and I needed a dress for some event there and several wives said, "Oh. We'll help you." And they told me where to go. So I went. Well, the dresses started at \$500.00. They just didn't realize that we were not being paid a king's ransom and couldn't possibly have afforded it. They were just sending me to a place that they knew was very good. Period. That's all I have to say. I liked them very much though.

CARROLL: Some of the meetings were held on campus, most of them. There was one in Keene. And then there is the Minary Center on Squam Lake. How was that center used? Why would you decide to meet there, for example?

KEMENY: Well, sometimes if we had one in the summer, which we did once in a while, it was just a lovely place to be. You know, the Trustees in short sleeves and a beautiful summer day on the screened porch and the wives would be going in and out in their bathing suits or tennis costumes or something. It was very relaxed and they found that they got a lot of work done, as do most groups that go there. It is just far enough away from Hanover and it is such a different atmosphere. I think it was owned by the Schraft Family. It looks rustic, but it isn't. It has many bedrooms. It was owned by the Schraft Family and Bill Paley of CBS bought it. You may remember that he was married to [Barbara] "Babe" Paley. It has some history. Jackie Onassis slept in this bedroom and "x" slept in that bedroom. But it is really a lovely, lovely, lovely spot and I hope to goodness that they will keep it. I am not sure they are going to.

CARROLL: How did it become Dartmouth property?

KEMENY: It was given by Bill Paley to Dartmouth.

CARROLL: Is he a Dartmouth alum?

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KEMENY: No. But he was mad at Columbia. That was his alma mater. We named it...he suggested...his really right-hand man called [John Minary '29] Minary, who went to Dartmouth. The only problem was that Paley, as I remember, did not give money to endow it and I think Minary did give some. I don't know that it was enough. Also, the Trustees were always fussing, or were fussing, that they wanted "x" bedroom and they couldn't get it because so and so was there. We had to double up or... It's funny. They were like little children. I don't know where it stands at the moment.

CARROLL: Now would you go to these Trustees' meetings?

KEMENY: Yeah. Yeah. If wives were going, I went, obviously. If it was a special thing, no wife went.

CARROLL: Did you have to then plan the entertainment or the meals or whatever? Or did they take care of that?

KEMENY: No. Sometimes. I didn't fill their days with things that they had to do. They loved to go to classes. They loved to go shopping. No. I don't remember that I...I had a couple of things for them, but not a lot. No. They went on their own a lot.

CARROLL: One thing Alex Fanelli said is he thought that...he didn't know if it was a tradition or if this is just something that happened frequently...that you would have a meal at your house at the end of a Trustees' meeting.

KEMENY: Dinner. Yes. And, at some point, I began to do these dinners from various countries and I would draw a menu and then we would try to feed...I don't know...fifty people. It was going to be an Italian dinner or it was going to be a Hungarian dinner or it was going to be a Yankee dinner. Those were fun. And those went very well. Then the last dinner I ever gave, we had moved out of the President's house by then, so the last dinner was done at the Inn upstairs in the Wheelock Room; but, we did make...I did make a dessert that was very popular and I brought that in. It was a chestnut mousse with chocolate and whipped cream. It was wonderful. So they were very delighted to see that at least one thing was homemade.

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CARROLL: When you were writing, and you wrote one book during the time you were there...

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: Did you write both books or was one afterwards?

KEMENY: The novel was afterwards. I started thinking about it while John was in Washington and I went down to Washington. I had a vague idea of what I wanted to write about but a reporter who...all the reporters were courting John at the time of Three Mile Island...Diane Sawyer was the CBS person, Andrea Mitchell was the ABC person. They were all women. Bettina Gregory, who I don't see very often now, was the ABC person. There were also several people...there was a science editor for the Washington Post called Tommy O'Toole...something like that. They would all take us out for dinner. And Tommy O'Toole was the one who was very helpful. I was going to go to the Library of Congress to do research. I didn't know where to go. He said, "Go to the National Archives", which is what I did and somebody said modern military history. Fine. I go up there. What do I do then? I started to talk with some nice little man who was involved with military history and somebody else comes over and gets sort and interested and sits in on the conversation. He turns out that he is head of Modern Military History. Well, they had become quite interested in what I was doing and they give me some tips on history. And the head of Modern Military History tells me that he hates these docu-dramas and all this stuff and I said, "Well, tough. That's what I am going to do." So, even so, he gave me lots of help. I was only there one day. But then we corresponded like mad with several people at this [Archives]...who all got involved, interested in this. I kept asking them questions that they didn't know, which was very interesting to me. One of them was...which is silly...the German U-boat. Did it have black rubber rafts or were they some other color or were they rubber or what were they?

CARROLL: And the answer?

KEMENY: Well, okay. I mean, they assumed that they knew and they didn't. One said, "Oh, wait. I sing in a chorus in Washington, D.C. with a former U-boat person who now is living over here. I will ask him. So he asked him and they were black rubber.

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The thing is that you have to know the questions to ask. There is a submarine in this, there is a U-boat in this story and they told me that there is one U-boat in the United States and that is in Chicago at the Science Museum. So, within six months, we were in Chicago. We were taking off that day. I took a taxi because it was a long way to the Science Museum. I get there. It turns out that a tour has just left through the submarine so I run to catch up and I have a little tape recorder and I am trying to tape in what I have seen. I have twenty minutes...twenty minutes only. I see quite a lot and then I lose my tape recorder. I mean, I lose my tape, so I have to do this all from memory. So when you read about that, it seems like I know a hell of a lot. Well, I do know something. I have to tell you though, seriously, you can write about what you don't know. I do not agree with the supposition that you only write what you know.

CARROLL: Did you ever see the movie "Das Boot"?

KEMENY: Oh, yes. I didn't see it and I didn't read it until after I finished my book. I did not want to be influenced by that. I also had a couple of books on submarine service, U-boat service and you pick things up from everywhere. Then they send me, after the book is out, two new books that have just come out through the National Archives on U-boats, which would have been a great help, but I did not have them at that point. Nobody has found anything wrong with anything in there.

CARROLL: When these books came out, especially the first one, did you then go on what we would call a "book tour"?

KEMENY: No. Not really. I did go to Washington and a couple of other places, but there was a Dartmouth alum who had been a senior Time correspondent, who is a friend and who was interested in what I was writing and he got me to meet some people, including a very nice woman at People and I did get a review in People.

CARROLL: Did they, any of the alumni groups, pick up on the It's Different at Dartmouth and ask you to speak to them?

KEMENY: Yes. Some. A couple did. When I was going on alumni tour after...don't forget, this didn't come out until the end of '79.

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Sometimes after an alumni meeting...Look. It wasn't...there were only two printings. I think it was a total of 5,000. They did sell; but that was it. I made \$10,000 for the two books. Total.

CARROLL: For all that time.

KEMENY: For all the time. That's all right. I mean, I think they could have done a better marketing job on my novel, but such is life. It did get some good reviews.

CARROLL: With that, one has to be happy, I suppose.

KEMENY: Well, I was upset, but it's like your baby. You have just birthed a baby. Nobody is wanting to see the baby. [Laughter]

CARROLL: Please come visit.

KEMENY: Some people couldn't get through it. It was too hideous in some places for them.

CARROLL: That's truthful. Is it based on a friend's recollection.

KEMENY: No. This was not based on anybody's recollection.

CARROLL: Okay.

KEMENY: This was before I met all these people.

CARROLL: I see. Okay.

KEMENY: I took some things that happened to me as a child on the coast of Maine and I said, "What if? What if? What if?" And it is told in these voices. It is told in journals and diaries or telephone conversations or whatever. Newspaper articles. There are seven main characters. Three in Europe and four in the States, I think.

CARROLL: Did you hear their voices in your head?

KEMENY: Sometimes. Yes. In fact, I would be down there writing and suddenly burst into tears. I don't know where I heard it, and sometimes I had no idea where I was going. And John said he would never forget the day I...Henry is a character, okay, just a

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character...I worked downstairs and I said to John, "I wonder what Henry is going to do today." [Laughter] It is an experience and I don't know how it happens and every writer says the same thing.

CARROLL: They become real people.

KEMENY: They become real people and you don't know exactly where it comes from. Surely some of it is in your subconscious, but some of it you never thought of about before. You don't know where it comes from. They become real people. They do. They really do.

CARROLL: I asked that because a friend of mine is writing her first novel right now. She says that she hears their voices. The characters begin when she starts writing their dialogue. They begin to just speak for themselves almost.

KEMENY: Henry was a character, as I said. He was supposed to be a very uptight person and I read a little Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conant Doyle, to get the kind of rhythm and wording that he might have used, slightly old fashioned.

CARROLL: That's interesting.

KEMENY: I would just read three or four paragraphs, but I would get into the mood. So, if you haven't read it...

CARROLL: No, I haven't it.

KEMENY: I really want you to promise me that you will not worry about saying, "Oh, it was good, Jean." Don't. No. Because it may be too much. It really is...there are some funny parts in it and some very, very, very rough parts.

CARROLL: I promise to approach it with an open mind.

KEMENY: All right. [Laughter]

CARROLL: You have talked a little bit about Carroll Brewster before. I was wondering too...Gil Tanis [Gilbert Tanis '38] worked for your husband for a few years, I think. He began the Dartmouth Institute.

KEMENY: Yes. Yes. Yes. He did a very good job.

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CARROLL: I was wondering what brought about the idea of the Dartmouth Institute?

KEMENY: Well, John's almost first speech to the alumni...I think it was in Boston...he had talked about...how did he put it...the refreshing of the mind or something that John Dickey had talked about. And he felt that it would be very important to have a program where people who perhaps had had liberal arts, but were now in business or something, and would like very much to sort of come back and refresh themselves and it became quite a good success. I mean, it now is defunct, I believe; but, people who took it raved about it.

It was very hard sometimes to get people to sign up the first time because this feeling in business, "If I am away, maybe somebody is going to take my job." This was even for a month or two months. It was always oops. Iffy. Once they came, they signed up again and again and their companies paid at least part of it. I can't remember whether there was some endowment for them, plus the company. I don't remember. I think the companies paid most of it. It was very good for the people. They became much more productive I am sure because they had had some more liberal arts of all kinds of things.

CARROLL: It makes you think again.

KEMENY: But I swear that John brought this up. He mentioned it in his first speech. It was in Boston.

CARROLL: So he had been thinking about this for a long time.

KEMENY: Yeah. I can't tell you when; but, anyway, it was on his mind.

CARROLL: I was curious that, in the Dartmouth Institute and Gil Tanis, he really ran it for quite a long time.

KEMENY: Yes. And I can't tell you for how long, but he really enjoyed.

CARROLL: He seemed to. I wonder how he sold it the first time. It had to be difficult.

KEMENY: I don't remember.

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CARROLL: I just can't imagine how you would approach people who had never thought about leaving a business...

KEMENY: I don't know how the word got out. I don't know who approached business people. I know that they had had things on campus. The Tuck School had had things in the summer. These were more oriented toward what people were already doing in business or something. But this was a completely different idea and, of course, the Alumni College had been a success where alumni came back and they would study some topic and delve into it deeply and talk about it. It was really the only topic of conversation. They were suddenly learning something new and different and interesting.

CARROLL: Now was the Alumni College already instituted under Dickey?

KEMENY: Yes. I think so. I am sure of it.

CARROLL: So it was there when your husband..

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: Now, with the advent of coeducation, I know they decided to implement the year-around plan to allow more students to get on campus. Were there enough off-campus programs in place or did they have to start making up programs?

KEMENY: I don't know if they had to start making them because of that. They didn't all go-off campus as an off-campus program necessarily "by Dartmouth". Some of them got jobs. Some of them found that it was much easier to work in the winter than in the summer...to get a job in the winter than in the summer. I mean, not everybody participated in what Dartmouth promoted or helped or whatever. Many did.

CARROLL: Was it important for John Kemeny to offer a foreign experience?

KEMENY: Yes. It was important to him. Oh, yes. I think I talked about this earlier that...in the United States, the student is too cloistered in many ways and we somehow feel that our language, English, should be used by the rest of the world. Why do we have to learn languages? The United States student is frequently...knows little

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history, even though they do take history in college. Somehow, they come to college with a lack of geography knowledge, historical knowledge, cultural knowledge. You name it. I don't know where we break down, but the undergraduate and the elementary and high school experiences seem to get worse. So that is one of the reasons that John felt it was important.

CARROLL: He also was instrumental in bringing a whole new group of student to campus. The Native Americans and black Americans.

KEMENY: Well, he mentioned specifically in his inauguration speech that he wanted to increase the Native Americans and the rural poor and blacks. When we arrived in '54, there were probably five or six blacks per class and they were sort of homogenized blacks, most of them. I don't remember any black at that time who had come from some poverty-stricken or rural area who was given a scholarship to come. I think what they wanted were people who they were pretty sure would make it. That changed.

CARROLL: Is that why the Bridge Program was founded?

KEMENY: That would be the ABC [A Better Chance Program].

CARROLL: The ABC...

KEMENY: The ABC Program was not started by John. That was started before and I think I am on tape on this with you.

CARROLL: We talked about it briefly, but what I am curious about is the Bridge Program.

KEMENY: Oh, the Bridge Program. I am sorry. Not the ABC. Yes. That had to be because there were people who hadn't gotten enough education, elementary school or high school. I mean, you can't just plunk them into a something 101 unless you are sure that they have some background for that.

CARROLL: Did the Bridge Program provide them with mentors, too? Did those people stay with them throughout...

KEMENY: I don't remember. Somebody can tell you that.

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- CARROLL: I was curious because a lot of these people who began to arrive...this was a foreign environment.
- KEMENY: Absolutely. Yes. Yes. Yes.
- CARROLL: It was scary.
- KEMENY: I think I wrote about this, the little kid from Washington who happened to be black, who gets on the bus and goes to Dartmouth. He takes about three minutes looking around and then goes right back to Washington and his mother put him on the bus and said, "Go back again." And he stayed. But it is true. It is really true. [Laughter] It was so...and there weren't very many blacks here anyway as role models; the same with the Native American Program. It is doing very well. A lot of it is Michael Dorris' work.
- CARROLL: That was my next question.
- KEMENY: He is an outstanding person and we were very lucky to get him. John hired him. He spoke at John's Memorial. Have you ever seen the tape of John's memorial?
- CARROLL: No. I would love to.
- KEMENY: It is really quite something. And I wasn't there. I was in the hospital. But Michael Dorris speaks there about John. They all speak about John. I've got it. I can lend it to you.
- CARROLL: I would love to have it.
- KEMENY: So while we are on the topic of videos, there were two videos. I am in one. It is done by a television station in town and I think I am talking about the Presidency and Three Mile Island and several things and I wonder if you want that.
- CARROLL: Yes.
- KEMENY: The other thing is that there was an attempt by Merelyn Reeve to write a book about the First Ladies of Dartmouth and she got quite sick and I don't think she is ever going to finish it; but she did a video of me for several hours where I am quite candid with her.

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This was in October of '92. I mostly talk about John and Ken Cramer might know, who is the archivist at Baker...

- CARROLL: Anne Ostendarp is now.
- KEMENY: I don't know. But, anyway, I am sure it is in the archives. Unless it is her property. I can't believe it is.
- CARROLL: I will definitely look it up.
- KEMENY: I know that it exists and Ken Cramer could probably tell you where it might be.
- CARROLL: I would like to get back to Michael Dorris. Who found him? Was it John Kemeny who found him?
- KEMENY: I don't know how he came to John's attention. He was teaching at Franconia College north of here and he had gone to Yale. I don't know how some of this came about. I don't know if Alex would remember. I just don't remember. If you have a chance, you could talk with Mike.
- CARROLL: He is on my list.
- KEMENY: Good. He was very sensitive. I don't want to tell you all about it because I want you to see what he says in the memorial video and, if you listen to him speaking...My sister said, "Oh, my God." Listening to Michael Dorris, the way he spoke. It was in cadence. It really is incredibly beautiful. That man...and his wife, Louise Erdrich...are gifted as hell. Of course, they give the credit to John because she met him in a class...Michael Dorris. Louise Erdrich and that is how they met.
- CARROLL: They are so gifted. Did you realize, did the people realize the scope of their talents?
- KEMENY: I didn't realize that he could write. I had seen a few things. Lots of faculty members write little things and I saw a book that he did some of the...it was an edited book, but it didn't grab me.
- CARROLL: Was there a Native American Program in place when he got here or did he really mold it?

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KEMENY: I think he really was in the forefront. I can't remember who had been here before. I don't remember. Honestly.

CARROLL: So he really had a free hand in sort of...

KEMENY: Oh, yes. He certainly did and there were some good people after him, but... Have you read The Broken Cord?

CARROLL: Yes. I read that, in part, because we were adopting and that's about his adopted son.

KEMENY: Do you have a son, also?

CARROLL: No. No. I said that is his adopted son.

KEMENY: Oh, yes. He adopted three children, all of whom turned out horribly. All because of this alcohol...fetal alcohol syndrome. Drugs and theft. The little girl was so sweet when she was tiny. They tried all sorts of things and she would run away. They are all...who knows now. One is dead. One died.

CARROLL: The one he wrote about.

KEMENY: Yes. Michael came to the hospital to see me just before he did the Memorial Service and said that he had just been to his son's grave and he put a few things on top of it that his son had loved. I thought that was so sweet. So Michael really is a terrific person. So I think that you should listen to this memorial service. It will give you some inkling. Have you read any of John's obituaries?

CARROLL: I read the one that ran in the Dartmouth Alumni Quarterly.

KEMENY: No. Not that. I mean, there's one that the Dartmouth...

CARROLL: Yes. The whole issue that they did.

KEMENY: There was a perfectly beautiful small editorial.

CARROLL: Really.

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KEMENY: My poor daughter speaks about her father, as did my son. Poor Jenny, who was having chemotherapy. But she still had hair. Now, if it had been anybody but Jenny, they would have no hair. But Jenny had so much hair that, at least, she could sort of fake it.

CARROLL: They were both here for the ceremony?

KEMENY: Yes.

CARROLL: You had to be in the hospital.

KEMENY: Yes. They brought me the tape immediately after the ceremony and we all watched. Of course, we were all dripping, dripping. I watched it about ten times and then, about April of 1993, I just couldn't watch it anymore. I just couldn't. There are some wonderful tapes of John giving a lecture about Einstein or coming back from Three Mile Island and speaking to the assorted multitudes at Spaulding. It is very exciting and, again, I can't watch that either. But you might be interested in them sometime.

CARROLL: A friend of mine who was on campus when he came back from Three Mile Island tells this amazing story of the train or everything delayed and everybody just staying in. Can you...

KEMENY: I can't remember exactly. I know we were exhausted by the time we came in. I know that John said, "I don't think I can do this." I mean, Dave McLaughlin was there on the podium waiting. He said, "I don't think I can do.." I said, "You always say that, but you always do." He got up on that stage and there was such a standing ovation. It just wouldn't stop. It just filled him full of energy and he got through it. It is a wonderful job of explaining everything you ever wanted to know about nuclear power and what happened and why it happened and who was to blame. It is an hour. He did a superb job. It is a good lesson to see how he could explain very complicated stuff.

CARROLL: It is a gift.

KEMENY: It is.

CARROLL: My friend who was sitting there said that the plane, or whatever, was delayed for hours.

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KEMENY: No, I don't... Maybe it was.

CARROLL: He may have exaggerated on the time, but he remembers that no one left and that this speech went on until, perhaps, eleven, twelve.

KEMENY: Yeah. It was late. I remember that.

CARROLL: And John Kemeny spoke without notes.

KEMENY: No. He didn't have notes. He had some slide things to show you what a nuclear power plant looked like and what went...

END OF INTERVIEW

Jean Alexander Kemeny Interview

INTERVIEW: Jean Kemeny
INTERVIEWED BY: Chris Burns
PLACE: Etna, NH Kemeny home
DATE: November 28, 2000

BURNS: Today is November 28, 2000. This is Chris Burns and I am at the Etna, New Hampshire home of Jean and John Kemeny. I'd like to begin by talking about your work in politics a little more. You and Jane had talked about your role in Thomas McIntyre's campaign for Senator. I was wondering when you first started to become active with the Democratic party?

KEMENY: I think it was when I came here in 1954. I was surprised to see how few Democrats there were in this town, mostly because people, if they were at all liberal, registered as Republicans so they'd have at least a say in politics in New Hampshire, because no Democrats were ever elected. So there were very few Democrats. And when was that—'56, it must have been, Adlai Stevenson's second...

BURNS: Were there other campaigns that you were actively involved in besides the McIntyre campaign?

KEMENY: Let's see. I was abroad in '64. Yes—I mean, for Hubert Humphrey in '68, and I remember getting my poor little son to take things around to—what's that project out on Lyme Road, it was the dead of winter, it was freezing cold, and we really thought Humphrey had a chance, and I think he did. And then that man, whose name I will not mention, got in, so the country was in for a lot. And then I sort of—by the time—I mean '68, '72, and then I was involved in other things, and never really got back into real politics.

BURNS: That was one of the questions I had for you, was once your husband became President, I imagine that . . .

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KEMENY: No, I didn't. I mean, I don't think he would have been upset if I'd gotten really involved and screamed around, but I was so bloody busy. And—in 1960, I guess I got involved, with John Kennedy. I remember with a friend driving down to Manchester the night before the election, for Kennedy, and there he was in Manchester, New Hampshire, the night before. It was all very exciting. And he did get elected. And we all thought he was terrific, and then things came out—it was sort of sad, you know. His reputation, at the end. What a sad [inaudible]. So really I didn't get involved after '72.

BURNS: Were you involved with local elections very much?

KEMENY: I'm sure I was, I just don't think of—I don't remember now, actually. Herb Hill, who was Professor of History, ran for Governor, didn't make it, on the Democratic ticket. Nice guy, and we all worked for him. But it wasn't until 1960, '62, that a Democrat got elected. John King, I can't remember when he was elected Governor [1962]. He was a Democrat. But I mean, it was always a losing cause, we all knew it. The Republicans just had a stranglehold. I think not anymore!

BURNS: Certainly not to the same extent. The next set of questions I have is kind of about the town-gown relations. I'm wondering how you would characterize that over the time that you were involved with Dartmouth.

KEMENY: Well, from my standpoint I thought they were good. I knew an awful lot of people in the town. Because we'd been here sixteen years before John became President. But many of them were my friends. And then when John was President I would have cocktail parties where I sort of split it halfway between town and gown, and try to get a good mix. The guys around the service station, and the medical school. It was fun to mix them all up. I don't know whether that helped or not, but I think things were pretty good. There have been—and I can't tell you when or how, but there have been up and downs when somebody will scream on one side or the other. We've had some people who have been very good with town-gown relations, at the College. This has faded, Chris. I just don't remember any big to-do's.

BURNS: When your husband was a faculty member, were you involved with specific groups or social organizations during that time?

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KEMENY: Not really, I'm trying to think of things. I didn't belong to the League of Women Voters, because at that point you couldn't work in politics if you belonged to the League. I worked at the hospital for a while as a volunteer, but I got very depressed because of all the people I was seeing and then they would die. Oh, God. I can't even think now. They can't have made a big impression on me. Oh. I was a little bit in—musical, the players, the Dartmouth Players. Oh, and I sang in Handel Society chorus, and Madrigals, which was a smaller group, I sang in that.

BURNS: And those groups tended to be a mix of Dartmouth . . .

KEMENY: Yes. Yeah, more professors, some town, and a few students. When I say professors I mean male, because at that time I think we had maybe one female professor, who had been there forever [inaudible].

BURNS: Was this the woman who was in the Biology Department?

KEMENY: Hannah Croasdale, yes.

BURNS: That sort of leads into the next topic, which is, your husband was sort of brought in by John Dickey and [Donald] Don Morrison, who . . .

KEMENY: Yes, Don Morrison mainly. . .

BURNS: . . .undertake a project to re-do the faculty. I'm wondering what your general impression of Don Morrison was.

KEMENY: He was fantastic. He was fabulous. He was a bright, burning star. And he burned out when he was 44 and died. He died at Princeton, and the rumor is that he was going to be asked to be the President of Princeton. He was young, I mean at that time 44 was young to be a president, of course John my husband was younger. But Don Morrison was—he had his fingers on everything, he knew what was going on everywhere. Not that John Dickey didn't, but Don was just on a level above. He was fantastic.

BURNS: Was that a particularly exciting time to be at Dartmouth?

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KEMENY: Well yes, because Don was trying to move it forward. The whole point in bringing John was to completely reorganize the math department, which he did. But he was also involved in other departments, and I can't tell you who—there would be people who could tell you what he did in other departments. And there were some wonderful stories from John which I can't remember. About Don's intuition, Don's—he was really—I don't know if you've gotten this from other people, but . . .

BURNS: John Hennessey, in particular, and Leonard Rieser spoke to the feeling among the faculty that were brought in, and you can look at the records and see the number of faculty that were brought in during that time that stayed at the College, and kind of trace the changes that happened following the actions . . .

KEMENY: I'm sure I mentioned this at some point to Jane [Carroll], but when Don Morrison was interested in John, he came down to Princeton—he wrote saying, “Oh, I want you to come to Dartmouth,” or something to that effect. And he came down to see John in Princeton, and unbeknownst, he had already seen the chairman of the mathematics department at Princeton; he had already seen Albert Einstein; he'd done his homework. It was the last thing we had any idea [of]; we were very happy at Princeton, [we weren't on the move] and he just . .

BURNS: So it was out of the blue?

KEMENY: It was out of the blue, and we had no idea we were going to accept, no way, no way! And I'm so glad we did.

BURNS: What sold you and your husband on Dartmouth?

KEMENY: Well, it was John more, I mean, good God--the chance to do what he wanted to, the chance to have a free hand in remapping the mathematics department. That's sort of fun.

BURNS: Yeah, it's a big challenge. Stepping back to Princeton for a minute, your husband worked with Einstein for a year?

KEMENY: A year, yes.

BURNS: How big of an influence . . .

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KEMENY: Enormous!

BURNS: In what sorts of ways?

KEMENY: Well, first of all, the man was kind and immensely intelligent and he would take an interest in what John was doing. John was very surprised but pleased, and he would make John tell him how his thesis was coming, etceteras, etceteras. I've probably mentioned this, but the reason John—the reason Einstein needed an assistant, was he needed a mathematician, because he was a physicist, and he was good at mathematics, but he wasn't great at mathematics. So he needed the mathematician for . . . level of whatever, and they were working on unified field theory, which has never been finished, and there was one part—I can't remember if I told Jane this or not—there was one period, for 24 hours, when Einstein thought John had come up with a solution. You know, can you imagine? And then can you imagine falling flat when it wasn't right? My God. And he learned so much from him, it's hard to tell you. I mean—

BURNS: It sounds as though he served as a real mentor.

KEMENY: Oh yes, definitely. Yes.

BURNS: Do you think that flavored the way that John worked with students when he was a teacher . . . ?

KEMENY: I don't know that that is—I don't know how great a teacher Einstein was . . . I mean, one to one, fine. I'm not sure how he would have been with students. My husband was a superb teacher, he really was a superb teacher. And he had of course this quality, which I'm sure has been mentioned somewhere, of making the most difficult, easily understandable. Just bringing it down to its—to the essential.

BURNS: From what I've heard of his teaching, it sounded as though he had a real passion . . .

KEMENY: Oh, yes. I mean, teaching to him was fun. When he was President, he taught because it kept him sane. Now towards the end, he was not quite so happy, because there was so much

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documentation, it was hell to find graders, and he had to park, God knows, way up the hill somewhere—I mean the parking was awful. It was just—he wasn't feeling well. It just was too much. I don't know, he would not have asked for a reserve space down near the math department. I had to practically kick him so that we could have a reserved space behind the gym to go to football games! I mean, he sort of didn't like to ask for perks. So the last couple of years of teaching he was getting tired, and hating--It wasn't that he didn't like teaching, it was just all junk that went along with it.

BURNS: This was after he retired from being President?

KEMENY: Oh, yes. He taught until 1990, and retired in 1990.

BURNS: It had just changed a lot?

KEMENY: Yes. Well, the parking really was a mess. It still is. But . . .

BURNS: Was this partially before they moved the hospital out?

KEMENY: Yes, this was before they moved the hospital. Well, it was 1988 to 1990 when it began to bother him. Now they were building the new hospital—when were they starting to build... It was done in '91, I think. But I don't know if that really had anything to do with it. I mean, there were always tons of people parking down near the lower part of the math building, do you know where I'm talking about?

BURNS: Not exactly.

KEMENY: Well, do you know where the white church is? Well, behind the white church down, and on the map it said "down," were parking areas. They were always filled up by nine o'clock in the morning, and John couldn't see at nine o'clock in the morning, [inaudible], so he had later classes.

BURNS: The next topic I wanted to cover was, when your husband is elected President, the transition between John Dickey and John Kemeny, and when you had spoken with Jane you had mentioned that John Dickey kind of stayed out of it once John was President. But I was wondering, during the transition period, if John Dickey had any

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advice for John Kemeny, if John Kemeny looked to John Dickey for advice.

KEMENY: I can't remember much. It was a very short—it was about six weeks, transition period. Because they wanted to get it done fast. This is a terrible thing. I tell you who might know, [Lucretia] Lu Martin. Because she was involved right from the beginning.

BURNS: Do you think there were any particular aspects of Dickey's administration that your husband wanted to continue, as far as what they had been doing?

KEMENY: I don't know what you mean by aspects. I mean, for example the Great Issues course, which was really John Dickey's fabulous experiment for a while but it sort of petered out a little bit. I don't know. I think some of these Lu could tell you more.

I mean, this is between you and me and nobody else. I don't think John Dickey wanted John to be President. He was quite a different sort of person from John Dickey. He was very, very nice and kind and everything, but I just had this feeling that he had—he was so happy, John Dickey, when [David] Dave McLaughlin was chosen, because Dave had been his bright young man. And Dave flubbed it, he dropped the ball.

BURNS: John Hennessey, in the oral history that he did with Jane, mentioned that your husband had come to him for some advice when he became President, on management, basically wanted a crash course in management.

KEMENY: I don't remember that.

BURNS: Do you remember anybody else that he looked to for advice?

KEMENY: No, I don't actually. And I'm happy that I didn't know that. No, I did not know that. He'd be the first to say he didn't know how to do something, but God, he was a quick learner.

BURNS: Right. Well, that's what John Hennessey spoke to, he figured he could learn it as quick as anybody. According to John Hennessey he did. Who did—was there anyone that you turned to for advice on running the President's House?

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KEMENY: Well, I talked to Mrs. Dickey. The problem was, I couldn't talk to— first of all, it was supposed to be secret. So as I wrote in [my] book I couldn't keep running over there and asking her questions, because somebody would say, "Why is Jean over there all the time?" And then I got sick, real flu, so I only had time to ask her maybe an hour's worth of questions. And I learned who watered the flowers, and who paid what person to do what. And I had to pay a lot of people myself. Now it's all changed. People don't do the cooking in the President's house, it's all brought in, which is fun. But we nearly killed ourselves, we were trying to save money. We went over budget once, I did. So John paid a thousand dollars back to the College. Now that's stupid! I know! Well, I screamed at him. I mean, Good God! I was working for the College, trying... Well anyway, he was so honest it hurt.

BURNS: What was the range of events that you hosted at the President's House? What are some examples of the type of events? You had Trustees' wives . . .

KEMENY: Well no, I had Trustees and wives. Oh, cripes. Dinner parties for visiting celebrities. Dinner parties for a Dartmouth alum that we hoped to get a little money from. Dinner parties for non-Dartmouth alums. Students, give and take, go downstairs with him, ask any question you want. Cocktail parties. Parties for town-gown. Parties for graduate students and wives. I don't want to think about it!

BURNS: It was fairly endless.

KEMENY: Yes, it was. But I don't do nearly as much entertaining as Susan does, Susan Wright. But she's got a lot more help than I did.

BURNS: They probably do a lot more catering too.

KEMENY: Yes, but she works awful hard, she does.

BURNS: What was your favorite audience to host? Was it students?

KEMENY: No, it wasn't actually. I'll have to think. Some things I'm bored to tears, which I will not tell you.

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- BURNS: We'll save that. We'll get it off the record...
- KEMENY: Yes. I just knew I was sometimes. Sometimes it was fun. It was fun. Walter Cronkite and his wife were wonderful fun, they really were. Mary Tyler Moore, on the other hand, I thought she was very cold. Captain Kangaroo was lovely.
- BURNS: Probably very nice.
- KEMENY: . . .He lives around here, in Norwich, he was friendly. I was just mentioning—I met a lot of people, and I thought it was great fun to talk to people and to get to know what they're like and bring up different sorts of questions that they wouldn't normally get, let's say, and... it's so hard to jump back. I've been away from it so long now.
- BURNS: Twenty years ago, at least. You spoke a little bit about development sort of events at the President's house, having potential donors over for dinners. . . and you had spoken to Jane a little bit about the fact that you would go off on these alumni trips to do fundraising.
- KEMENY: No, it wasn't just fundraising, it really wasn't. It was really to let the alumni know what was going on at the College. And we also met students that the alumni—would find students in the various cities that we went to, and John would talk about Dartmouth and then I would talk about Dartmouth, to them. And really, I think I was valuable on those alumni trips because I would take one side of the room and he would take the other. And I got interviewed an awful lot by newspapers, all over the country. I was fairly young, and it was an Ivy League school.
- BURNS: You were quotable.
- KEMENY: Yes, sometimes too quotable!
- BURNS: Were there specific fundraising activities that you got involved in? For instance, your husband led the Third Century Fund before he was President. Did you play an active role in any of that?
- KEMENY: My role, I think, was just being alive, being able to talk about things. I can't put a finger on—well, I used to have—John and I would talk

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about all sorts of ways to approach something, but I can't tell you which one worked or didn't work or whatever. I mean, I was really involved, but through him. We talked all the time about everything.

BURNS: Did anybody ever feel that there was a specific audience that you would be well-suited to talk to?

KEMENY: Well, I did speak to alumni, and I would go down to Boston to speak to all the Boston clubs a few times. I spoke to the Alumni Council once. What else? So, I mean, they used me. They began to see that I could be valuable at times, if I reined myself in.

BURNS: And do you think that's a role that Mrs. Dickey didn't play?

KEMENY: No, I don't think she did. I mean, she was a very motherly and very nice lady, and she had a good sense of humor, but I don't think she—I mean, I just came in on the cusp of the feminist times. And she was still that sort of old-fashioned hostess that—I don't know if she even traveled with him, on alumni trips. I'm not sure, she may have, I can't . . . But she was more low key. But that was the way most people were at that point.

BURNS: It's probably what was expected of her, to a certain extent.

KEMENY: But she had been President's wife since just after the war. And at that time, people were still going around and if they visited they would leave their card. But when I got married in 1950, my mother said, Well, I guess we'll have to have cards printed up, because you're going to live in Princeton. And I didn't use a card, but people did. You know, they'd turn the corner down, and this meant something, and I can't remember. I didn't . . .

BURNS: All of that etiquette.

KEMENY: Mm-hm. Pretty stupid.

BURNS: It's certainly changed a lot since then. We spoke a little bit about the Three Mile Island Commission, and one of the topics I wanted to discuss was, were there other activities kind of on a national scale, beyond Dartmouth, that John Kemeny participated in as actively as that?

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KEMENY: I remember he and several . . . Vietnam—he and several Ivy League presidents went to Washington to see Henry Kissinger, they were furious—I can't remember, it was the bombing of Cambodia, when was it? 1972. And they did see Kissinger, and John was not impressed. He said, "I think he's the most amoral man I've ever met." But who the hell cared whether the Ivy League Presidents were upset or not. That was essentially the feeling in Washington.

In many respects he tried to stay out of politics. And he did until—I don't remember. He was on national commissions on the libraries, and he was on this and that of Carnegie Commissions... These were not news-making, particularly, committees or whatever.

BURNS: More professional organizations?

KEMENY: Yes. I mean, he would have the top-level jobs within that. I can't think of anything else that brought so much—I mean he was on the news all the time for Three Mile Island! Where he learned to get to know Diane Sawyer, Andrea Mitchell and some other people [inaudible], they became his buddies.

BURNS: Really? That's wonderful.

KEMENY: Well, they wanted to get news out of him, so they—well, anyway.

BURNS: I think you spoke to that to a certain extent when you spoke with Jane, about how he would have dinner with various reporters. One who had actually given you some advice on your second book?

KEMENY: Yes. Thomas O'Toole, who was a reporter for the Washington Post, the science editor. He suggested that instead of going to the library...

[End of Tape 5, Side A — Beginning of Tape 5, Side B]

KEMENY: So Tommy O'Toole gave me some advice, and the archives was wonderful advice. And he said, "go to the Modern Military Branch", which I did, and started to talk with this lovely little old man, and then somebody else came in to listen, and that turned out to be the head of Modern Military, and he got interested. I had sort of had a vague idea of what I was going to do, and he got very interested, so

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we talked for a long, long time. So when I—but he said, "You know, I don't like people—I don't like to read or see on television, taking true events and changing them," you know in a fiction, which is what I did. But I sent him the book when it was published, and he said, "I know I told you I didn't--but it's a good book." He was very pleased with it. But he had advised some of the—all kinds of famous—the books and TV things: The Winds of War, and all kinds of books. And he was from Burlington. Mr. Wolf. So anyway. But I had tons of questions, and the more questions that got answered—I mean, I didn't know what to ask. But gradually, little by—and then I would ask about a certain armament, and then I would—I did so much research myself—I envy these writers who have sixteen different little researchers. I did it all!

BURNS: Did you enjoy doing research for that book?

KEMENY: Yes and no. I got very upset because so much was in German, and I didn't speak German. But I managed—what I didn't know, I made up. I had a whole thing—of a young German who gets into the Waffen-SS—it's before they had Panzer-type units. So he goes through basic training. I didn't know what they did in basic training in Germany, but I figured, well, it must be somewhat like basic training in the United States. So I sort of played around with it, and it worked! Nobody ever said, "That didn't happen!"

BURNS: So maybe it is the same.

KEMENY: Well, it would make sense.

BURNS: Did you ever have any thoughts of writing another book after that?

KEMENY: Off and on, yes. But I—recently I had an idea. The trouble—it was so damn hard. It wasn't just hard to write, but I was downstairs. I wrote downstairs, day after day after day—I didn't know if it was night or day. I think it was nine months, it was an awful lot of work, and it was very solitary.

BURNS: It sounds as though you really were absorbed in it.

KEMENY: Oh, that's the trouble. You would do something else but you kept making notes, I kept making notes. I just couldn't get away from it. But I think it's a good book, and—I read a review... [by] a very good

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writer who does reviews for the Maine Press-Herald, it goes all over the state [inaudible]. And he said "This may be one of the best books of that period." Heh heh heh!

BURNS: Well, that's quite a compliment.

KEMENY: Yes. Since practically nobody read it!

BURNS: When your husband became President, several of John Dickey's staff stayed on with him. One of whom seemed especially important was Alexander Fanelli. I'm wondering if you can sort of characterize what role you think he played in your husband's administration. It's kind of a broad question.

KEMENY: Yes it is, and Alex played a--he was very important. He was always there cleaning up, (that's not the right word), one of the many things, he would draft letters as though John had written them. Although John wrote a lot of his own, but—I remember once, John said to Alex, "Try to write Hungarian?" Not Hungarian, you understand, but the way a Hungarian might write it. Anyway, Alex was very valuable, and I'm not sure that he really knew much about John or felt that he was going to be loyal to John. By the end of that term he was the most loyal person, he was just fantastic—and he's got Alzheimer's, it's very sad. He's still able, I guess, to talk—I've got to go over and see him, he's in one of the retirement places, or care places in Norwich. He was very valuable. He did all kinds of things. Ask Lu. Lu knows more than I do. I can't think. He just was there all the time.

BURNS: And they sort of came to see eye to eye?

KEMENY: Oh yes, yes, definitely.

BURNS:

KEMENY:

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BURNS: Another individual who your husband worked very closely with was Leonard Rieser, who came to Dartmouth around the same time . . .

KEMENY: Yes, but earlier, a little earlier.

BURNS: He was brought in by Don Morrison. And then their careers were almost sort of parallel throughout a lot of that time: John was Chairman of Math and then Leonard became Chairman of Physics.

KEMENY: But then Leonard became Provost.

BURNS: I believe he was Deputy Provost and then. . .

KEMENY: Yes, but John was just aching to be able to have more say-so. And Leonard was going to appoint somebody from the sciences to be a Deputy Deputy Deputy, I don't know what it was. But he didn't appoint John. I wrote him the nastiest letter. I mean, we had no idea that later on big things would happen. This was just so John would have more of a voice in a minor capacity. He just was going to get too big for—too big for Dartmouth; he was going to have to leave. He was getting some offers, slowly. Like: President of City College—aaah!

BURNS: New York. That was not where you wanted . . .

KEMENY: You lived in Harlem; I mean, not the bad part of Harlem, but the trouble is, you had guards, and this is awful, this is terrible! But anyway, I don't remember... Oh, Leonard, yes, Leonard. They were good friends, although sometimes I had a feeling that Leonard wasn't always as good a friend as everybody else thought he was, with John. I think Leonard was jealous. He was—he might have been—I think he was a candidate for the presidency. And I've never told anybody this. And he did not get it; he would have been an absolutely terrible president. He was never on time. He couldn't! He was a very nice guy, but he would not have been a good president. However, they did work well together, and as the years went by Leonard became closer and closer to John, he really did.

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- BURNS: That was sort of my question: when your husband then was President, throughout that Leonard is in one of the top academic spots. They must have been very close.
- KEMENY: Yes. I don't mean to say what I did, but I said it so I'm just going to [stick with it].
- BURNS: Did you see the Riesers socially?
- KEMENY: No, not that often, although we were friends, and Rosemary I knew very well. Usually would see them elsewhere. We were only at their house once, I think, in all those years, for a meal. Somehow we saw them quite frequently, but at other events or whatever.
- BURNS: In a small community, where their careers crossed so much. . . Student government: In one of John Kemeny's first addresses to the College he speaks of the need to revitalize student government . . .
- KEMENY: Yes, it had gone downhill, and it was because of the Vietnam War and all of the protests, and then people just felt that—any government was blech!—"Ah, we don't need it, it's irrelevant"—relevance was the word!
- BURNS: Do you think it's ever recovered?
- KEMENY: I think some of it has. I don't know where we are at the moment. Do you know where we are?
- BURNS: I don't think it's . . .
- KEMENY: I don't see it mentioned . . .
- BURNS: In looking at some of the old Dartmouths from the fifties or the forties . . .
- KEMENY: Yes, yes. Well, that was a bad time then. The forties and thirties . . . I was reading a history of Casque and Gauntlet, C&G. Even that—which was sort of supposed to be the cream of the crop, they had a terrible time during the late 40's. Maybe it was because of the war being over, and—I don't know. I don't know what the story

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is now, but now that you've brought it up, I realize I haven't seen any mention of student government. Isn't that funny?

BURNS: Yes, it seems to play a marginal role on campus these days, especially in terms of the student participation. Maybe it's not getting the best and brightest. Also a student question; your husband had open office hours for the students to come and voice their concerns.

KEMENY: And several Ivy League presidents said, "You're nuts!"

BURNS: Were these well-attended?

KEMENY: Yes, oh yes. And if a student got him and wasn't done, then John stayed. And all the other students had to bloody well wait, that was the way it worked. First come, first served, and however long.

BURNS: What sorts of things were they talking about?

KEMENY: Everything, everything, everything. They could gripe—but, they didn't gripe that much.

BURNS: Directions the college was taking?

KEMENY: Yes, but that wasn't—it was sometimes more personal. Yes, directions. Why did you do this, or why didn't you do this? And a lot of them were very nice. And one kid wanted to talk about Einstein so they talked about Einstein for an hour. It just depended.

BURNS: Whatever they wanted.

KEMENY: Yes, yes. But that was very good for him, for John, and for the kids. I mean, he'd answer any question, and if he didn't know he said, "I don't know." And he would do that on the radio station. . . . "Ask President Kemeny anything you want." So, "When does X happen?" "I don't know." "I don't know"—he used it. Which was, I think, very good actually.

BURNS: It sounds a little more honest than President Reagan's "I don't recall."

KEMENY: It was honest! But yes, right.

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BURNS: It seems like—I don't want to say it was his agenda, but one of his strong urges, I guess, was to stay in touch with the students through the radio addresses and the office hours, and . . .

KEMENY: Yes, and you have to keep doing it. It wasn't just that this meeting with the students would last for a long time. It was sort of, do this, or you're going to have to keep doing it over and over again. But it worked. He was very well thought of by kids.

BURNS: It seems as though he was very committed to the students, too... Why did—do you have any clue as to why he felt so passionate about the Dartmouth undergraduate body?

KEMENY: Well, I think he felt passionate about teaching. And he taught students. And he felt—well, he felt it was one of the greatest callings you could have. I mean, the other thing was of course his research in mathematics. He worked in pure mathematics. I mean, I could not understand it: it's very very very very very above most of us. And I mean, if you asked him, "What are you?" he said "I'm a mathematician [inaudible]" And then he'd probably say, "Two, I'm a teacher."

BURNS: Another aspect of his student relationships seems to be the student interns.

KEMENY: Those were good, I think that was very important.

BURNS: Was that something that was new to the president's office?

KEMENY: I think so, yes, I do. I mean, now there are interns—and then, after a couple of years there were interns in every—in all sorts of departments, and athletics, everywhere. The kids learned a lot. He didn't hold back anything, or most anything, from them. And they were sort of working alongside when there was a problem, or this was going on or that was going on.

BURNS: So they did all sorts of duties?

KEMENY: Yes, they did.

BURNS: Did they sit in on meetings?

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- KEMENY: I don't know. It never occurred to me to ask, I don't know.
- BURNS: Who would have supervised them?
- KEMENY: Probably Alex Fanelli, . . . I don't know.
- BURNS: Around the time that he becomes President is around the time that the environmental movement starts to really take off. What sort of things were happening at Dartmouth at that time too? Do you remember how the administration reacted to that . . . ?
- KEMENY: Well, saving oil—that was an environmental problem. I'm just telling you that we went through crisis after crisis trying to pay for oil. And then also, of course... "How much did you burn?" Every building, including the President's house, had little graphs: how much you'd burned, how much you should burn, how much we shouldn't burn—oh God, it went on and on and on. But we saved money. I don't know about water—I mean, I know we knew we shouldn't pollute this, and I don't know what we burned in our—it came out of the smokestack, whether we did anything about that. I don't know, I just don't know. It didn't make an enormous impression on me. I mean, I think we were all aware of pollution, but I don't know what was done about it. I mean, environmental studies came in early at Dartmouth—when did environmental studies start?
- BURNS: As a program?
- KEMENY: Yes. Could have been in seventy-....
- BURNS: There were a lot of new academic programs that were started...
- KEMENY: Yes, yes yes. And you could major across, Environmental Studies and Art History, who knows? I just don't know.
- BURNS: Having been interested in the theater prior to this presidential era, were you active much with the arts that were going on at Dartmouth while your husband was president?
- KEMENY: No. I bought student sculpture.

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BURNS: For the President's House?

KEMENY: Yes. I mean it was mine. But . . .

BURNS: Did you host any art events there? You had talked, I think, a little bit about--you had a dream of showing films at the President's house.

KEMENY: Well, that was way back, when there were not things such as VCR's, you know, these were the big projector movies, but nobody saw them, you see, because you didn't—anyway, I didn't. I did have—I remember a party we had for Pilobolus [Dance Theatre], which was a dance class that had originated in Dartmouth and then had gone out, dance group . . . gone out and [become] very, very famous, on Broadway, etc. Then there was an art exhibit of antiquarian books? All kinds of sort of weird things. I didn't do much about theater, did I? I don't know. Yes and no. I was [inaudible].

BURNS: The last kind of block of questions are kind of summary questions of the presidential term of your husband. Were there particular issues that had to be faced, that stand out as the most difficult issues?

KEMENY: The Dean of the College, Carroll Brewster, who was Dean of the College in John Dickey's next to last or last year. He was chosen by John Dickey, very good-looking, young man who'd gone to Yale. So when John was picked as President, they said two things: You cannot fire Leonard Rieser, you cannot fire Carroll Brewster.

BURNS: The Board of Trustees?

KEMENY: That's right. And, which wasn't that strange? Well, Carroll Brewster became a thorn in John's side. He was a very sly, strange person who was very much against, although he didn't show it so much to the Trustees, he was very much against coeducation. He was very—he loved to drink beers with the boys, and I mean, he was—he was a great party potential, he was a great party whatever you call it. And had a lovely, lovely wife. But he tried to undermine John's presidency; worming in and out, trying to get coalitions... And John just had had it. So he talked to one of the Trustees, [William] Bill Morton, and told him . . . And in the end

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Bill said, Yeah, I think you will—if this—oh, I know. Toward the end, Brewster would go and visit Trustees—

BURNS: On his own?

KEMENY: Yes. And lobby, [though I can't remember how]. But he was just trying to—he was trying to really overthrow John, in a way. I think he wanted [inaudible]. So.

BURNS: So that was really difficult . . .

KEMENY: . . . that was awful, and it—it was just awful. So in the end, some people from—what's the college in New York state?—came; they were interested in the president. So they said, "We want to talk about Carroll Brewster." John said, "Well, come right over!" [laughter] He didn't lie [but] boy, he didn't—anyway, they hired him. I mean, John had essentially fired Carroll Brewster, and Carroll Brewster knew he was being fired; but this was a way of saving face. So he was there for a few years, then he got kicked out of there and went to a place in Virginia, where he was again kicked out. And his last job was running Paul Newman's "Newman's Own" stuff—you know, it's a foundation, a charity, whatever.

BURNS: It sells all the products and . . .

KEMENY: Right, I think he did. Now Sandy McCulloch thinks Carroll Brewster is God, but I think he's the only one that thinks Carroll Brewster. He was a [inaudible]. Good-looking guy, I mean I would go to bed at night cursing Carroll Brewster. I couldn't stand what he was doing to my poor husband.

BURNS: Making his job a lot more difficult?

KEMENY: Yes. And then of course the Dartmouth newspaper, the Review. That really didn't come until sort of the end of John's tenure, but they were vicious to [inaudible]. Many of them have gone on to the Wall Street Journal or elsewhere, in right-wing capacities. Or other places, but in right-wing capacities.

BURNS: There were some pretty big changes when John was President, such as coeducation and the commitment to Native Americans, the recommittment. Was there—with something like coeducation was

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there such a momentum built up with that that it wasn't terribly difficult, or was that . . . ?

KEMENY: I think by the time it went through, people were sort of thinking maybe it will. I mean, the Trustee vote was terrific. I mean, it wasn't unanimous, but it was certainly a plurality of yes's. And a lot of things were happening, but they were exciting times; people felt excited. Which they have not felt so excited since. Just—it was a very exci—well, Dartmouth—John made the Presidency exciting.

BURNS: He was a real catalyst for positive change.

KEMENY: Yes. Positive is exactly the word, yes.

BURNS: So what—

KEMENY: So what have I learned with all this?

BURNS: Essentially, yes. What do you think is the legacy of his presidency?

KEMENY: I think he'll go down as one of the three best presidents that Dartmouth ever had, at least. The other one being Tucker . . . I think more and more, people—you know, when he died I got hundreds and hundreds of letters, which really helped. But this theme kept running through: "We can't believe that he could die." They somehow—I mean, this'll sound very strange, but he wasn't supposed to die, he can't die, I mean, he just can't die! As though he were immortal or something. Which sounds silly, but people literally couldn't believe that this kind of thing could happen. That was one thing. And of course the student letters were just—I mean, they would unburden themselves to me, telling what they felt he had done for them.

BURNS: Do you think he'll be remembered more for the accomplishments or more for just the energy that he brought to...

KEMENY: I don't think you can separate them. I really don't.

BURNS: Did he ever have any great regrets about any decision that the College made while he was President? Did he think he made any wrong turns? For instance, the year-round plan was brought in . . .

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KEMENY: He brought it in, he thought it up

BURNS: He brought it in, for coeducation, to make that work. And there was continued debate about that.

KEMENY: Oh, sure. But it really calms down, I mean—"Oh, we can't see our friends, blah blah blah blah blah." I think that really has calmed down enormously. I don't hear any more criticism, any criticism. And it's really quite ingenious. But Yale couldn't do it, for example. They looked into it, but the summers are terrible down there, etc. I think it's only been done—I think Colgate does it. I don't know if anybody else does it? Several colleges, I know, thought about it. However, it has worked.

BURNS: That's about all the questions that I have. Do you have anything else that you can think of that you'd like to add?

KEMENY: Let's see. I think he was a superb president, I really do. And it's not just because he was my husband, although of course it's part of it. He just made everybody want to do better.

End of Interview