

Dartmouth College Oral History Project
The War Years at Dartmouth
Interview with Alexander Medicott '50
By Mary Stelle Donin
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DONIN: Now Joe, I noticed when I was researching you that you appear in the 1949 *Aegis* rather than the 1950. So there's a story there.

MEDLICOTT: I came for a short time and then left.

DONIN: In the beginning you mean? You matriculated with the class of '49?

MEDLICOTT: Yes.

DONIN: So that was in '45. Which wave of '49ers did you come with? They came in four groups.

MEDLICOTT: Well, it would be fall.

DONIN: Was it fall? That was the third batch that came in.

MEDLICOTT: Yes, I think so. That was it.

DONIN: So did you do the matriculation ceremony with John Sloan Dickey? Do you remember?

MEDLICOTT: I think I did it with the class of '50 because I left before there was any matriculation.

DONIN: Oh, I see. OK. So you started very quickly with '49 and left and came back the next year.

MEDLICOTT: That's correct.

DONIN: I see. OK. But they still put you in the '49 *Aegis*. That's curious.

MEDLICOTT: I don't know why. Well, I'm in the '50 graduation... What's the graduation book called? *The Aegis*?

DONIN: Yes.

MEDLICOTT: I'm in that one.

DONIN: Oh, you're in the '49 as well.

MEDLICOTT: Oh ok.

DONIN: Well, let's back up. What brought you to Dartmouth? Were you a legacy of some kind? Did you have any relatives?

MEDLICOTT: No. My father was Yale. And I interviewed at Yale in my early high school career to go down and—because my dad was interested in the old tradition sort of thing. And I can remember very, very vividly as if it were yesterday that I interviewed a guy named Noyes, who was dean of admissions at Yale. And I entered a room that was four times the size of this and the ceiling was, you know, 800 feet up. And he was sitting behind a desk that looked like an old aircraft carrier, stroking a dog and very tweedy. And he had an unfortunate partly repaired cleft palate. It was a terrible interview because he looked at my record and said, "Well, this isn't particularly good." And I acknowledged that my high school record was not brilliant. He said, "I don't—" And I remember this almost word for word. He said, "Because your father went here is no guarantee you're going to get in." And that was pretty much the end of the interview. And I stroked his dog and left. And a few weeks later— My dad had a number of Dartmouth friends in Springfield, a great many of them. And I always liked them. They were hail fellows, well met. So I came up here, and Dean Strong was in charge. And I went into his kind of grubby office in the basement of McNutt or whatever it was over here. And he lept up and came out from behind his desk to greet me as if he had waited all year.

DONIN: Oh....

MEDLICOTT: For Medicott to show up.

DONIN: Yes.

MEDLICOTT: Yes, it was a wonderful interview. And so I signed up. And he said, "You know, after the war, you get through this thing, come on back; we'll be happy to have you." So that's how it started.

DONIN: Great.

MEDLICOTT: I wanted a school pretty much in the "wilderness." And Dartmouth was far more wilderness than it is today by a long stretch of

imagination. And I liked the outdoors, and I liked the people that I knew who were Dartmouth products. So it was a very comfortable mix.

DONIN: Did you have any classmates that were coming—that you knew—that were coming here from Springfield?

MEDLICOTT: There was a fellow named Bellows I knew vaguely. And I think he came here. But, no. A lot of my high school classmates did not go to college. But in that era, as you know, Mary, high school graduation was a very fine education and a great many able young men and able young women went into the workforce and prospered and did extraordinarily well. I had friends from Classical High School who came here, a few. And then they went to U-Mass and Yale and Wesleyan and Williams and so forth.

DONIN: So you arrived on campus coming back with the class of '50. Where were you as a freshman? What dorm were you in?

MEDLICOTT: I was in Russell Sage.

DONIN: And so this was the fall of '46.

MEDLICOTT: 'Forty-six, yes.

DONIN: It was really full here, I gather, because a lot of the veterans had returned.

MEDLICOTT: Well, I was one, you see. I came on the GI Bill.

DONIN: Uh-huh. You'd already done your service.

MEDLICOTT: I had, yes.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: And as I recall vague numbers, Dartmouth was about 2,000 prior to World War II. And 3,000 after World War II. Single rooms became doubles, doubles became triples and so forth. And in talking to my pals from other schools at the time, every school blossomed.

DONIN: Right.

- MEDLICOTT: Because the government was paying the bills, and these schools wanted to get in on the gravy train.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: And the GI Bill was a remarkable contribution to this nation. Good grief! When you think of the small cost to the government and the thousands and thousands percent dividends repaid. Just terrific.
- DONIN: A huge opportunity for so many people.
- MEDLICOTT: Great. You bet.
- DONIN: So Russell Sage. You were sort of one of the older vets then.
- MEDLICOTT: Yes.
- DONIN: What did you make of these sort of wet-behind-the-ears, straight out high school, kids that were in your class?
- MEDLICOTT: I roomed with a kid named Bill Perkins, who I think is the late Bill Perkins. And he was about 16 or 17. He'd come out of some little high school in Maine. And there were no animosities. We were just different. He was puzzled by me, and I was puzzled by him. And then after Russell Sage, I moved in with a couple of guys in Hitchcock.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: And they were vets. So that was all right. But there was no friction between the older guys and the younger guys. We were here to go to school, period.
- DONIN: Did you feel like you were a better student?
- MEDLICOTT: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.
- DONIN: Having been away from school for a couple of years?
- MEDLICOTT: I think you talk to any vets, the years away from high school, in between high school and college did that miraculous, indefinable thing called maturation. And our dregs had settled. We still were full of juice, but our dregs had settled, and I think we came back with more "purpose" than I might have if I'd lock-stepped my way out of

high school and into college. That's why after many, many years of teaching, I urge young people to take some time off between high school and college. Don't hang out at the Darien Country Club and improve your squash game. But get involved with all the things that need to be done in this country: illiteracy problems and hospice care, the environment. When you think of the thousands of things kids can do productively between high school and college, I guarantee they will come to college with an entirely different view.

DONIN: How did you find it in the classroom with this sort of wide range of life experience among the students? I mean were the veterans sort of overwhelming to the, you know, the brand-new high school grads?

MEDLICOTT: I don't think so, Mary. I never remember some veteran saying, "Shut up, kid. You don't know what you're talking about." I don't remember any of that sort of thing. Lots and lots of classes had veterans and lots and lots of classes I took did not. But it was never a factor really. We were all part of an educational institution, and we were here to learn.

DONIN: How did you find the teaching?

MEDLICOTT: I got to know a number of faculty members quite well. One of them was Arthur Dewing. I don't know if you ever heard that name. He was in the English department. A real curmudgeon. Harvard MA, and of course in those days an MA was very prestigious, particularly from Harvard. He'd been to Dartmouth. And we got along just famously. Even after he retired, I used to come up and see him. And we got talking about those years a great deal. And he said, "We, the faculty, didn't know what to make of you guys." I think in some way anticipating this hoard of barbarians coming, particularly when they were coming on the GI Bill for free. And many of these young men, of course, would never have gone to college. That sort of answer. But the democratization of the GI Bill brought all kinds of people in here. And I think the faculty for a short time were kind of stunned by what they were facing. And suddenly realized, hey, these guys are okay after all.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: They're not damaged. They're not troublemakers. They're not unteachable. These are not people who are going out and become criminals in the world and so forth.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: So it didn't take them very long. Teaching was, as it is today—some wonderful people, brilliant teachers, well-versed in what they were teaching, great rapport with the students, charming, debonair, challenging the whole range of emotions that fill a teacher's pocketbook. And others were terrible, you know. [Laughs] The victim, I said, we were the victims of the tenure system.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: Which I have been against since I started teaching.

DONIN: Well, it's been said by many that was one of John Dickey's sort of legacies, was that he really made an effort to upgrade the faculty who were ready for— You know there were a fair number that were sort of on the cusp of retirement anyway.

MEDLICOTT: Yes, yes. That's very, very true.

DONIN: And he left his mark, having hired a new batch; among them was John Kemeny of course in '54.

MEDLICOTT: Oh, sure. Yes. Well, as a student generally you're not terribly aware of a newcomer coming in and on the tenure track. Today you can spot them in a minute because they all are sweating and the veins are standing out on their necks, you know. They're panting and doing everything right. But in those days... Partly, you know, Mary, it's an aloofness that an enlisted man has with an officer. And we were all, if you will, enlisted personnel, and the faculty were the officers.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: So we didn't hobnob much with them. But there were some classes like mine with Arthur Dewing where I sensed that he was interested in us, and certainly I was interested in him. He was a tough guy. He was not one to suffer fools gladly. But I learned a great deal from him, not only in class but in our long, long talks afterwards. He was great.

DONIN: [...] Of all the professors that you had, was there one that was particularly—besides Professor Dewing—was there one you looked to as sort of a mentor or someone to guide you?

MEDLICOTT: Well, I was fortunate to have courses from Francis Child who taught Shakespeare. And he was just marvelous. And Anton A. Raven in the English department. He taught tragedy; he taught a wonderful course in tragedy. But there again, I think a lot of us coming back from the war felt that we were capable of making our own decisions, and we didn't need a lot of mentoring. I may be wrong, Mary, but I do recall that there was a part-time shrink on this campus named McKenna.

DONIN: Oh, interesting.

MEDLICOTT: And I think he was the only—and of course I could be wrong; having taught memoir writing for a long time, I'm beginning to realize what people remember and what are the facts are quite different. But I think he was the only shrink on campus, part time. And if anybody had an issue—that's the word we use today for everything—if anybody had a problem, they were perhaps urged to go and see the psychiatrist or the psychologist. And no one who had a problem would ever go because guys didn't go to see shrinks. And the buzzword was, if you've got a problem and you go to see the shrink, the shrink will tell you, Get a hold of yourself. Get a grip on yourself. [Laughter] That was the kind in those days. But we all felt, being older and "more mature" that we didn't need to be guided. We were going to be our own guides. Well, I got a lot of good information from my classmates, fraternity brothers, pals.

DONIN: Uh-huh. So let's talk about the social side of life then.

MEDLICOTT: Mm-hmm.

DONIN: Did the fraternities—they did their rushing and they rushed you as much as they rushed the right-out-of-high-school kids, I assume.

MEDLICOTT: Yes, and it was sophomore year. You couldn't do anything until the sophomore year. And my two best pals, classmates—three good pals, wonderful pals—decided we wanted to go to SAE. So we went over there and said, "You take us all or you take nobody."

DONIN: Oh!

- MEDLICOTT: And of course they did.
- DONIN: They did?
- MEDLICOTT: Yes, they did. [Laughs] Happily they were real hail fellows well met. And that was fun. I lived in the fraternity with Cliff Wyman, my classmate. And my other roommate was Lou Veghte. [...] So I roomed with these two guys. We had a wonderful time. We had a—you know the mix of a fraternity. A couple of good old Southern boys, and a couple of laconic New England types, and some Midwesterners. Couple of California guys. A wonderful mix, you know. And the only— We whooped it up, but not to the extent that the guys have whooped it up in “Animal House” terms.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: The only party I ever remember that was quite memorable was the veterans all decided we were going to have a veterans’ weekend. So we urged the non-vets to stay out of the house. And the rest of us sat around, drank beer, and talked.
- DONIN: Hmm. Nice.
- MEDLICOTT: Yes, it was great.
- DONIN: So did the social life here change at all to acknowledge the fact that there were these sort of older, more mature veterans on campus? I mean, somebody mentioned Dickey opened a little bar, I guess you’d call it, in the basement of College Hall or Collis?
- MEDLICOTT: That’s right. They called it the Slop Shoot.
- DONIN: [Laughs] Slop Shoot.
- MEDLICOTT: [Laughs] I think it was a Marine term. But nobody went. One of the nice things about the fraternity system here—and I’m not sure, Mary, if I approve of fraternities and sororities; and that’s just me, you know. I think I’m tainted by the abuses that I’ve seen occur in them. But we drank. We drank beer. I don’t think there was a lot of whiskey being consumed. Tanzi down here, you know that name. The brothers ran a grocery store. There were a couple of over-the-hill cabbages in the front, you know. And the back was filled with cases of beer.

- DONIN: Right.
- MEDLICOTT: We drank beer, and in those days we could carry beer into the football games.
- DONIN: Well, in those days, the drinking age also was lower than it is now.
- MEDLICOTT: I guess. But it didn't bother us because we were all older anyway.
- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: The social life was bizarre because there were no women on campus.
- DONIN: So did you do all the famous road trips that everybody talks about?
- MEDLICOTT: Sure. Yes, yes. And most of us should have been killed on those road trips because going down Route 5, we'd go driving like hell in all kinds of weather. And we'd go into Smith and Mount Holyoke. And the guys went to Skidmore and the usual places. Wellesley. The weekends, the big weekends—let's see, Fall House Parties, Winter Carnival, and Green Key; and those were the biggies. And the girls would come up on the trains, and it looked like a troop train coming up. [Laughter]
- DONIN: And is it true that you cleared out the frats and let the women stay in the fraternities and you guys slept on the floor somewhere.
- MEDLICOTT: Right. Or we'd go to a dorm where some guy had an extra pad or we'd sleep on the floor, yes. That was it. Coeducation is just wonderful. It just did everything for this college. They were too late in getting to it, that's my lament. [...] And the social life was, for its time, of its time.
- DONIN: Was there anything to do off-campus? And I don't mean go to women's colleges, but locally like in White River, West Leb or—
- MEDLICOTT: They were hardly cultural hubs, you know, in this part of the world. And some guys would go down there. But they'd rather drink in a bar down there than they would in the fraternity house. Well, getting back to the drinking and fraternities and parties, even if you were not a member of a fraternity, you were always welcome at any of the houses. They were not so bloody exclusive.

- DONIN: Is that not the case today?
- MEDLICOTT: I don't know. I wouldn't think so. Probably the percentage of undergraduates in my time who were fraternity members was far greater than it is today.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: I think.
- DONIN: Well, it was truly the only game in town.
- MEDLICOTT: It was the only game in town.
- DONIN: I mean, you could go to the Nugget or go to a fraternity house, it sounds like.
- MEDLICOTT: Yes, yes. Terrific options. [Laughter] I know guys that went to every movie that ever came to town.
- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: Then the parties, the parties with women or without women, were 1940s, early fifties parties, you know. They were....
- DONIN: Did you ever mix with local women or girls at the high school, or was that sort of considered off-bounds, off-limits?
- MEDLICOTT: It might have entered our minds, but we never did anything about it.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: See a cute girl on the street or something. And somebody'd say, "She's high school." And oh-oh, you know. Remember the term jailbait?
- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: Okay. Yes. No, I don't know anybody that—there were a couple of, there was one guy in my fraternity who married a nurse who was in the training program here.
- DONIN: Oh, yes.

- MEDLICOTT: A guy named Per-Jan Ranhoff from Oslo.
- DONIN: Ah-ha.
- MEDLICOTT: A marvelous guy. He taught for many, many years at the Pomfret School in Connecticut. But, as you said, that was the only game in town. How we survived without going bonkers is— Well, bear in mind, most of us, or a good many of us—I don't know what the percentages are—had come out of all-male institutions: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard. So we weren't exactly happy with the situation, but we had been there and done that.
- DONIN: Right. And everybody was in the same boat.
- MEDLICOTT: Yes.
- DONIN: Did you take the Great Issues course? It was up and running then, right.
- MEDLICOTT: Oh, yes. One of the great moments of my career at Dartmouth. Ask anybody who took that course.
- DONIN: Yes, yes.
- MEDLICOTT: Stunning! Just stunning!
- DONIN: His timing was just right.
- MEDLICOTT: Perfect.
- DONIN: To develop this kind of course.
- MEDLICOTT: And when I look back and think of the people who came to talk to us. I was reading the other day a review of a new book by the grandson of Nietzsche who was George Kennan's friendly adversary. And George Kennan was here.
- DONIN: Mm-hmm.
- MEDLICOTT: He was the uncle of one of my classmates, as a matter of fact.
- DONIN: Huh! Well, Dickey had amazing contacts from his State Department days.

MEDLICOTT: Sure, sure. Yes.

DONIN: That allowed him to bring amazing people to campus.

MEDLICOTT: And the system, or I should say the way, the manner in which the course was run, was absolutely fabulous. And we were all required to read several newspapers every day. There's a dying art. Boy!

DONIN: Indeed.

MEDLICOTT: And we'd get the *New York Times* and the *Daily Worker* and the *Chicago Tribune*. The term paper was based—you would do two weeks of research on an event. I remember doing the AFL-CIO convention. And I had to read every day how the *Times*, how the *Tribune*, how the *Daily Worker*, all these papers, treated it. What an experience!

DONIN: So your homework assignments, were they not tied to the speakers that came, or not?

MEDLICOTT: Well, the text for the course was the *New York Times*.

DONIN: I see.

MEDLICOTT: That was the textbook.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

MEDLICOTT: And, I don't know, it was 50 cents or something. And the college got a good deal, so we weren't paying very much for it.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: That was the text. And there were hour exams based on the lectures primarily. And there was a term paper, of course. And I think there was a final exam, too, based on what we'd heard from everybody. You know Robert Frost was here, charming and avuncular. Kennan, incisive. Historians. Beardsley Rummel, the withholding tax czar, you know.

DONIN: He was a trustee, too, wasn't he?

MEDLICOTT: Yes, he was.

- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: And the system was that we would come in on, say, a Tuesday night to hear the lectures.
- DONIN: Uh-huh.
- MEDLICOTT: And then Wednesday morning we were— 105 Dartmouth held the entire senior class. The lecturer would add a few remarks and then be quizzed. Oh, boy! We sat on the edge of our seats. It was thrilling.
- DONIN: I assume you were an English major, is that right?
- MEDLICOTT: I was, yes.
- DONIN: So you knew that right off the bat? I mean, even in high school? Or when did you—
- MEDLICOTT: That I was going to teach?
- DONIN: Well, that you wanted to major in English.
- MEDLICOTT: Oh, yes, yes. I came out of a—My dad loved to read, and he was a good writer.
- DONIN: Uh-huh.
- MEDLICOTT: And I had a great-grandfather whom I never knew who fled the coal mines of Wales when he was 14, came to this country, and the boat sank off the coast of Long Island so he swam to shore and he established a woolen mill down in Connecticut, right over the line from where I am now. And he made a helluva lot of money. And at the time of his death, he had the largest private collection of Middle English and Anglo-Saxon literature in this country.
- DONIN: This was your great-grandfather?
- MEDLICOTT: My great-grandfather.
- DONIN: This wasn't in the Medicott line was it?
- MEDLICOTT: Yes, he was a Medicott. William Gibbons Medicott. And he was not an educated man. At 14, you can't—you know don't go to

Oxford and Cambridge then. But when he came to this country, he apparently carried with him a zeal to learn. [...]

DONIN: So you knew it was in your blood. And that was why—

MEDLICOTT: Well, I love the language, and I wanted to write. And I figured I'd do newspaper work, and I love that. [...]

DONIN: Oh, so Great Issues for you must have been just heaven.

MEDLICOTT: It was a joy. It truly was. [...] And my two pals, Cliff Wyman and Lou Veghte went to Tuck School. Other pals went either to Harvard Business School or many went into the law. A handful went into medicine. I don't know how many guys in my class wound up as teachers, but not very many. [...]

DONIN: Mm-hmm. So did you ever interact with John Dickey personally?

MEDLICOTT: Oh, I guess he knew vaguely who I was, and certainly I knew who he was. In those days, Mary, as you may have heard on more than one occasion, he was everywhere on this campus. He and his dog. And he'd stop you on the campus and say hello. And chitchat and natter and hobnob. I can remember getting to know him a little bit after graduation because I was on a couple of committees.

DONIN: Uh-huh.

MEDLICOTT: But he was a wonder. And that quality, that kind is never going to be replaced on college campuses. First of all, what was he—20-some-odd years as president?

DONIN: Yes. Well, let's see, '45 to '69.

MEDLICOTT: There you go.

DONIN: It's a long time.

MEDLICOTT: Yes, it is. And he was just a—not only a very learned, very highly educated man. But he was a warm human being. And his wife was charming, too. A good guy. And we've had our ups and downs in collection presidents, since, as you know.

DONIN: But he seems to be the....

- MEDLICOTT: The grand old man?
- DONIN: Well, the one that everyone else is measured against.
- MEDLICOTT: Oh yes.
- DONIN: And how often do you hear a speech given on this campus when he's not quoted?
- MEDLICOTT: Good point. Exactly. That's a tough act to follow. The bar is pretty high. In some ways it's unfortunate. [...] That's another thing about my class: two Blacks in the class.
- DONIN: Class of '50?
- MEDLICOTT: Two Blacks in my class. One of them was a scoundrel and a scamp and fleeced a lot of people in his afterlife and died young and the other was an eminent physician down in Washington, DC. And I don't know if the quota system was around or not. One thing about the quota system, when I joined the SAE house over here, it was a Southern-based fraternity.
- DONIN: SAE was?
- MEDLICOTT: Yes. It started in the South. Someplace in Alabama.
- DONIN: Oh, interesting.
- MEDLICOTT: And in the charter, no Jews, no Catholics, and certainly no Afro-Americans, no Blacks. Well, I think within the first year, the guys in the house said, "The hell with this. We either withdraw from the national or you're going to have to change this." And because we were a pretty good fraternity, the national, whatever they were, you know, mother ship or whatever it was called, backed down.
- DONIN: And they took those clauses out.
- MEDLICOTT: They took those clauses out.
- DONIN: We have a long interview with John Dickey, about 45 hours and he addresses this exact question.
- MEDLICOTT: Does he? The quota system.

- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: Oh good.
- DONIN: With Bob Strong.
- MEDLICOTT: A great man. There was a team, those two guys.
- DONIN: Yes. And that was really the first thing he tackled during his first ten years on campus. Making sure these fraternities lifted those clauses. Some cooperated and some didn't. As you said, some had to leave their national group in order to meet the requirements that Dickey laid out.
- MEDLICOTT: I think it started in Amherst actually about 1946. Some fraternities said, either you lift these quotas or we will go local and the nationals said, no, we're not going to change these quotas. So somebody said, ok, we'll go local. A year or so afterwards they all changed.
- DONIN: Were there a fair number—were you aware of Jews in your class that were particularly badly treated or—
- MEDLICOTT: No, no. It's a cliché to say some of my best friends.... But I have classmates who are as close to me as non-Jews. It didn't make a damned bit of difference.
- DONIN: Yes.
- MEDLICOTT: To me.
- DONIN: Right.
- MEDLICOTT: And to most of my— I think most of my classmates— I think if this campus had been loaded with Afro-Americans and perhaps.... Of course being an Asian on campus in that era was not a very good thing.
- DONIN: I've heard comments—not comments—stories from fellows who remember the few Japanese kids who were on campus.
- MEDLICOTT: Oh, boy!
- DONIN: It was awful. [...]

MEDLICOTT: As far as Jews were concerned, I don't think there were any Jews in SAE to tell you the truth. They had a Jewish fraternity, Pi Lam. And it was not exclusively Jewish because there were some non-Jews who joined. But, no, I don't think it made any difference. [...] I had a wonderful time here, Mary. It was a great time. By contemporary standards, it was positively primitive. The dorms were brick cells. And the gym was a mess. In the wintertime the snow came about the end of September and lasted until late May, you know.

DONIN: Yes. Long winters.

MEDLICOTT: Long, long winters and four feet of snow in the middle of campus, you know.

DONIN: Were you an outdoorsy person before you came?

MEDLICOTT: Oh, sure.

DONIN: Or did you learn to be one?

MEDLICOTT: Oh, no, no. I loved the outdoors.

DONIN: So you embraced the winters and outdoor stuff.

MEDLICOTT: Oh, sure. Yes. People today ask me, do you go south in the winter? I say yes. They say, "Well, where do you go? Vero and Palm Springs?" And I say, "No, I go to White River or Claremont." Occasionally I go as far south as Northampton to see my daughter. [Laughter] No, I love it, I love the seasons. My dad was a great outdoorsman, a great hunter and a great fisherman.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: Boy, I picked it up from him, and I'm so glad.

DONIN: That's great. Do you think the class identity or the class unity or both was impacted in any way by the fact that you were such a diverse group? A combination of sort of seasoned veterans like yourself mixed in with these right-out-of-high-school kids? I mean, was there any kind of division in the class between the vets and the non-vets?

MEDLICOTT: No, no. Certainly not now after sixty... We've got a 60th reunion coming up next year.

DONIN: Right, right.

MEDLICOTT: And I've never felt it, there was any great diversity in our present time between those who had gone in the service in World War II. A lot of guys, you know, went in Korea.

DONIN: Oh, absolutely.

MEDLICOTT: We had a lot of guys. We had a few career military guys. But, no, I don't think so. Boy, if I could define the chemistry, Mary, that is Dartmouth and the camaraderie that exists even to this day, something happens up here when kids first show up. It may be the environment. It may be the selectivity of the admissions department. And maybe the weather. I don't know what it is. But it's rare. [...] But maybe part of it is that—and I hate even to think of the word—but there is a kind of elitism that used to go with the Ivy League. I don't think it's there anymore.

DONIN: Mm-hmm.

MEDLICOTT: But to be part of the Ivy League in the late '40s and early '50s was rather special. I don't think that's so much anymore. Maybe it is; I don't know. But in that sense of, we belong to a very special fraternity. And that's sort of held us together. Plus the fact we like it, for the most part. We've got a few damned fools in the class, our fair share, the maudlin drunks and the weirdos. But welcome to the 21st century. Welcome to humanity.

[End of Interview]